



African Violet

MAGAZINE

African Violet Multiplication

AVSA Best Varieties List

75th Anniversary: Commercial Legends

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.



President's Message

By Sue Ramser

2413 Martin St. • Wichita Falls, TX 76308

Email: president@avsa.org

To our AVSA Friends:

As this column is being written our weathermen here in Texas are predicting cooler weather. As you read this, some of you are experiencing winter temperatures. This reminds us that the end of the year is approaching, and what a year it has been! So many events have been cancelled or rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped that 2021 will be a year in which we again will be experiencing the excitement and beauty of African violet shows and events.

It is time to prepare our plants for the long winter ahead and the spring shows that will follow including our AVSA 75th Anniversary Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. More information about the 2021 Atlanta Convention can be found on page 38.

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of AVSA Past President Hortense Pittman on August 26. Hortense hybridized many beautiful African violets throughout the years. More information about Hortense appears on page 58. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her and grow her beautiful plants. We extend our sincere condolences to her family.

Your Executive Committee has been meeting virtually on a regular basis to accomplish the business of AVSA. We have exciting news to announce. Digital AVSA Memberships are available for those of you who prefer a digital-only membership. They are \$28 per year. This class of membership will receive the *AVM* in digital format. If you prefer to have the print version, it is still available for \$35, plus you also will have access to the digital version. The digital *AVM* will be posted on the website on the first of the month: January, March, May, July, September and November.

Your Executive Committee has been meeting virtually.

Fortunately, Hurricane Laura did not damage our AVSA Office. Many areas of the Gulf Coast suffered severe damage and are still recovering from this devastation. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who still are recovering from this hurricane.

As you are reviewing your end-of-year tax planning, please remember AVSA in your planning. AVSA is a 501(c)3 organization and offers many giving opportunities: Barbara Burde Fund, Booster Fund, Boyce Edens Research Fund and the Tinari Endowment Fund. Donations may be sent to the AVSA Office or made online using PayPal or a credit card.

At this time of year your Executive Committee would like to thank all our volunteers who help your Society run efficiently. At times we are remiss in thanking and showing appreciation for the people who work tirelessly for our Society. Without our volunteers, your Society could not accomplish the things we do. We would like to give a big round of applause to all those who volunteer countless hours for AVSA. THANK YOU!

Your Executive Committee would like to extend Greetings of the Season to you and wish for you a happy and healthy New Year. Feel free to contact me or any of your Executive Committee if you have concerns, suggestions or recommendations. Please continue to remember through our two-way communication, African Violets Continue to Connect Us!



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1890s

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Exhibited by: Paul Kroll



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1940s

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Exhibited by: Elmer Godney



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Design: 1980s

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Exhibited by: Elmer Godney



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky



My First Violets: Violet Multiplication

By Sandra Skalski Mullica Hill, New Jersey

Email: sskalski@comcast.net

Hemingway wrote, “One cat just leads to another.” At one point, the writer owned more than 50 cats. Many African violet collections can put those “cat numbers” to shame. Violets are addictive, and once you have one or two, you are very likely to acquire 10 or more. You will have favorite plants that you want to share with friends and family. You might even want duplicates of a favorite for yourself. Or perhaps you admired a variety that someone else grows and they offered you a leaf. How do you turn that leaf into more plants?

Tips for Leaf Propagation

Leaf propagation is the easiest way to multiply your violets. There are as many ways to propagate leaves as there are growers. Most of these techniques will give you baby violets, but some are more reliable. Here are a couple of general guidelines:

- Soil mix, sphagnum moss and perlite all are suitable rooting mediums. Water tends to be an inferior rooting medium, because the roots developed in water don’t readily adapt to potting mix and the plant will need to grow new roots once in soil.
- Though any healthy leaf will work, fresh leaves from the middle row will give you the best chance of success. Reject fading, older leaves from the outer row. They are unlikely to produce babies.
- Keep the leaves and soil mix covered to maintain a humid environment. The rooting mix should be evenly moist, but not sopping wet. When needed, water with your regular fertilizer solution.
- Prepare a leaf by snapping the petiole or cutting it on an upward-facing diagonal with a sharp knife. Leave about a 1.5-inch stem.
- Place your leaf starts in good light.
- Leaves will form roots before they grow babies.
- Smaller cups limit the amount of soil the leaf has to fill with roots and will yield quicker results.

- Label your cups or bags so you will not forget the variety name.

Leaves will form roots
before they grow
babies.

Small plastic cups are ideal for starting standard plant leaves. Fill the cups with potting mix, place the cut petioles in the mix, and slip into a ziplock sandwich bag. Foam egg crates are ideal for starting leaves from smaller plants like miniatures and semi-miniatures. I cut them in half, making two “nurseries.” I fill the cells with my potting mix and set a leaf down in each cell. If I’m working with a tiny miniature, I might put two leaves down in the cell. I mark the upper left corner with a Sharpie and create a separate chart with the variety name. The entire nursery goes into a ziplock bag.

Another easy way to start a leaf is to place about 2 inches of potting mix in the corner of a ziplock sandwich bag, add your leaf, then seal the bag. You can hang this on the side of your plant stand or even tape it to a window. Remember to label your leaf starts. Otherwise, you will be disappointed when you have unidentified, healthy babies.

When the Baby Plants Grow

After a few months, you will have many baby plants, like the ones in Photo 1. Wait until the babies have at least four leaves and look large enough to handle before you try to separate them. Remove the entire clump from the rooting container (Photo 2). To separate the babies, gently tease them apart,



Photo 1. Baby plants from leaves.



Photo 2. Clump removed from container.



Photo 3. Gently teased baby roots.



Photo 4. Potted in container and sealed with baggie.

trying to keep some roots on the baby plants (Photo 3). Resist the urge to keep all of the baby plants. The tiny plantlets with long, thin stems will not give you strong plants. Save two or three of the strongest plantlets. Pot them into small plastic cups or pots and seal in a baggie or other container until they are well rooted (Photo 4).

When you put down leaves, you will usually get an exact duplicate of the variety, but there are some exceptions. Sometimes, growers get a plant that does not look like the parent. This is called “sporting.” Some heavily fantasied blossoms might not “come true” with leaf propagation. You might get a solid color blossom with no fantasy, or you might get another color, such as the color of the fantasy splotches.

Chimera Propagation

Chimeras are plants that have two separate genetic codes that most often express themselves as striped or pinwheel blossoms. These plants need to be propagated by sucker or by blossom stem since they will not come true from a leaf. New chimeras usually arise as sports from a leaf.

Look for plantlets that have birthmarking, which shows up as dark red splotches on the back of the leaves. These plantlets have a good chance of being different from the parent plant. Sports are part of the fun of starting leaves, and you might end up with something you like better than the original plant.

Sucker Propagation

An even faster way to get a new plant is by rooting a sucker. Sometimes a single-crown plant will grow a smaller plant near the crown or between rows of leaves. If left in place, the sucker will distort the symmetry of the main plant. However, if you carefully remove the sucker with a sharp, pointed tool, you can root it to start a new plant.

This is a great way to start a chimera. Trailer crowns can also be rooted in a small pot or cup.

Successful Propagation

What can go wrong with violet propagation? If the leaf is older or unhealthy, you are unlikely to get baby plants. Try using a young, fresh leaf. Wet soil

and fungus might cause leaves to rot. Your starting mix should be moist, but not sopping.

If you place a leaf in a large amount of soil, it might spend all of its energy making roots instead of babies. Use the smallest container possible, relative to leaf size. If a leaf has been rooted for several months but has not produced babies, try giving it a tug. Sometimes a bit of stress will convince the leaf to reproduce. Of course, there is

a chance you will be too successful. If your leaves give you many plants, keep one or two of the best and share the others with family and friends. Or grow some for your club's plant sale. Save room in your growing area for different varieties.

Are you ready to multiply your violets? Happy growing!

“Perfectly Pittman” Video

This video chronicles the multiple hybrids, growing techniques, growing spaces and AVSA involvement of Hortense and Ray Pittman.



Jolly Orchid

**Available in the
AVSA Store.
DVD and Thumbdrive
format \$20**



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Lucien Croteau

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by: D. Croteau

Won Best in Show for Tom Greer in 2008, National Show
Standard

Growing and Judging Variegated Violets

By Kurt Jablonski Miami, Florida

Variety is the spice of life, or so they say, which is why African Violets have remained so popular among hobbyists in a world filled with many tempting plants to grow. Today — thanks to hybridizers — violets come in all shapes, sizes, foliage and blossom types. Personally, variegated standards are my true “diamonds” in the jewelry box of our favorite houseplants.

When violets first were introduced, they remained very close to their ancestral parents. Fortunately, they have the predisposition to “sport,” or mutate, giving us new traits and characteristics. One such mutation was from a plain, green-leafed plant to one marked with margins of white and cream on the leaf edges. Not only did this new trait add to the allure of the violet, it also brought about new techniques in growing these plants. Such beauty has led to a substantial increase in popularity among show growers. For this reason, it is paramount that not only growers — but also judges — learn all we can about variegates’ culture and how to determine point scoring in judged competition.

Growing

In my research, I came across very few articles about growing variegates and even less about judging them. I did find that when variegates were first popularized in the 1960s, it was believed that they were more difficult to grow and that a special regimen was required to successfully grow them. Growers commonly thought that they needed a fertilizer developed exclusively for variegated plants, more intense light, the perfect spot on the light stand and most importantly, special temperature requirements. It was believed they needed to be grown cooler in order to variegate properly. Cooler temperatures combined with Peter’s Variegated Special 5-50-17 fertilizer was deemed the recipe for success.

The fertilizer’s higher phosphorus and lower nitrogen led to more intense variegation in the plants.

We must maintain adequate green in the foliage so that the plants grow and bloom well.

Although this method led to some success in growing variegated plants, I believe that we have since learned a great deal about these plants, which has helped us improve their growing. It has been my experience that variegates do not need a totally unique culture to grow well but that growers should tweak certain aspects of their care for ultimate performance.

There is a fine line between too much and too little variegation when growing show plants. Most growers believed in the early days of variegates that plants with the most variegation in a show were to be rewarded. Now we know this to be untrue because chlorophyll is essential for plant growth. We must maintain adequate green in the foliage so that the plants grow and bloom well. This is one area that is extremely important, because unlike with solid green plants, having too little green in the leaves can be detrimental. Too much variegation equals less bloom. All of the variegated plants in my collection have the edge-type variegation. Ideally, I aim to have my show plants exhibit 25 to 30 percent variegation and 70 to 75 percent green in the leaves. This balance has proven to be a winning combination when I show.

Consistent care plays a vital role toward achieving this proportion in the foliage. All of my violets are raised on individual reservoirs. I use T12 light fixtures, one warm and one cool tube, which run 9 hours per day. My temperatures are not always ideal. When the air conditioner is running, it is 76 to 78 degrees, but for the better part of the day it remains around 88 to 90 degrees. Yes, that is extremely hot! I have dispelled the myth that growing in warmer conditions means your variegated plants will turn solid green. My plants maintain beautiful variegation.

For me, temperature plays less vital a role than fertilizer. I have found that feeding variegates a balanced fertilizer such as Dyna-Gro 7-9-5 or Jack's 20-20-20 at 1/4 tsp instead of a fertilizer high in phosphorus allows the plants to develop their beautiful colors in the foliage as well as enough green to bloom adequately. Inconsistent care and varying fertilizers at each watering always ends up with a culture break of uneven/inconsistent variegation and leaf size in my plants.

Judging

When the *AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges* first was written many years ago, African Violet shows were made up of all green plants. Today, variegated violets are available in all types and sizes. The beauty in their foliage and blooms has made growers exhibit them at an alarming rate. Because of their popularity in the past 15 years, our shows have begun to feature more variegates than ever before. For this reason, growers and judges must understand how our plants are scored. Our handbook has some information about variegated violets, but to my mind, it needs expansion because these plants are so favored among growers and often make up the majority of entries in our shows. Two sentences in the book are insufficient to understand how to properly score them.

As I mentioned earlier, culture of variegated plants plays a vital role in producing a perfect show plant. The key to success is diligence. Inconsistent care leads to culture breaks in the foliage. Aside from crown-variegated plants, edge-variegated plants should exhibit consistent margins of cream, white or pink along the leaf edges. This is to say that should a culture break occur, and a plant develops either a

solid green leaf, solid white leaf or an entire row of either leaves, judges need to deduct points under condition. Up to one point off for each wrong colored leaf seems appropriate.

Due to lack of guidance pertaining to variegates, judges do not know where to take points off.

Take a solid green plant as an example. During judging, if the plant were to exhibit leaves of a lighter green color, yellow leaves or marks on the foliage, points would be taken off without question. The same should be true of variegated plants marked with inconsistent variegation in the leaves. Due to lack of guidance pertaining to variegates in the handbook, judges do not know where to take points off and consequently ignore the problematic leaves.

I have included two pictures of plants with uneven variegation. In Photo 1, Tiger has some leaves that are almost entirely green, some almost entirely white, and one or two leaves showing the correct amount just along the leaf edge. Surprisingly, this plant won Best in Show in the commercial division of an AVSA National Show. This is an excellent example where if the judges had more explicit deductions



Photo 1: A Best in Show Tiger that has uneven variegation. Photo credit: Marjorie Bullard.

in the handbook, several points would have been taken off, reducing this plant to a more appropriate red ribbon.

Photo 2 depicts a plant that was a blue-ribbon winner at a National Convention. This Lyon's Black Magic definitely is not a blue-ribbon entry. The crown and the subsequent two rows of leaves are completely white, while other leaves in the outside row are solid green. At some point in this plant's life, it had at least two changes in culture that account for the changes in variegation. Most likely, it was from using different fertilizers or drastic temperature changes.

Each fertilizer has a unique make-up and the plant will respond with different growth when fed different food. Seasonal drops in temperature often bring about more variegation as well. Again, judges lacking sufficient explanation about point-scoring of variegates leads them to reward inferior plants with ribbons they do not deserve. This in turn encourages exhibitors to continue to show mediocre plants rather than learn what they need to do to improve their growing techniques.

Lastly, Photo 3 illustrates a plant that displays an even amount of variegation from the crown to the outer row of leaves. This Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler was grown over a period of a year and a half to achieve the desired size and look of the plant. As with all my show plants, I removed any marred, irregular, off-size or baby leaves to allow the plant to put energy into its mature foliage. Since I had to learn the hard way about rotating fertilizers and the result it has on foliage, I fed this plant a consistent diet, maintained ideal growing temperatures and



Photo 2: (left) Wide variation in leaf variegation on a blue ribbon Lyon's Black Magic. Photo by Bob Clark. Photo 3: 2017 National Second Best in Show Winner Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler with consistent and appropriate balance of green and variegation. Photo by Mel Grice.

gave it prime shelf space so that I would groom it at every possible opportunity. Putting in the time and effort with this plant was well rewarded. It was judged 2nd Best in Show and Best Standard at the 2017 Orlando National Convention.

Consistent culture and care will always lead to receiving the maximum points under condition and is within **total control** of the exhibitor. Exhibiting a well-grown and equally variegated plant is a true testament to a grower's skills because it requires an attentive eye and adaptation to produce a winning plant. While I don't claim to be an expert, I do believe that through my own successes and failures I have learned how to grow a variegated plant that is balanced in foliage and has sufficient bloom.

It is our duty as growers and judges to understand all types of African violets and score them correctly in our local, regional and national shows.



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Rebel's Rose Bud

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by: R. Bann

Won Best in Show for Richard Nicholas, 2007 National Show

Standard

It's Beautiful, but What Do I Call It?

Naming, Sharing, and Completing Show Entries for Russian Hybrids

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

In recent years, Russian and Ukrainian (R/U) hybridizers have made stunning contributions to the African violet world. While it is wonderful to have so many new and exotic varieties to enjoy, we must remember as responsible African violet growers that it is still necessary to use correct names when discussing, sharing and showing these R/U beauties.

In the same way that we are conscientious about honoring the contributions of North American, European, and other hybridizers worldwide, it is vital to honor and thank our R/U hybridizers by upholding the same standard. How can we do that, though, when the names are in a different language and are written in a different alphabet? Some basic guidelines follow. If you read, remember and follow them, R/U African violet hybrid names will be less challenging to learn and share.

Formatting of Names

R/U African violet names are not formatted the same way as AVSA-registered varieties. The name of the R/U African violet often begins with the hybridizer's initials, followed by a hyphen and the name of the hybrid (usually, one or two words, as in the popular trailer LE-Erika). In another widely used configuration, R/U hybridizers will place their own name in parentheses after the variety name, as in Tenets Galaktik (Morev).

In a third (and less common) option, if the hybridizer gives away a seedling and allows the recipient to name it, the name would read "seedling hybridizer name," as in "seedling Morev name" or "SM-*****". Knowledge of these formats makes it possible to know, at a glance, who has hybridized each variety. Once you understand the patterns, it will be easier to get these names right.

One can quickly see
that where translation
goes, confusion
follows!

Translation and Transliteration

In most cases, R/U hybrid names cannot be accurately or reliably translated into English. Russian and Ukrainian hybridizers often name their African violets for mythological figures, important landmarks, popular names, connotative (as opposed to denotative, or dictionary) word meanings and usages, or abstract concepts that do not necessarily have a literal English translation. What's more, in cases where translation is possible, there might be several different options and several different spellings for the same word or concept. One can quickly see that where translation goes, confusion follows!

It is poor etiquette to ask for an English translation of the name of R/U African violets. It also is improper to use an English translation in place of the R/U name when discussing, sharing or showing an R/U hybrid. Instead of translation, think in terms of *transliteration* — using the phonetic spelling of the Russian words (which are represented in the Cyrillic alphabet).

Even transliteration, however, has its pitfalls. The following example comes from fellow R/U African violet grower and devotee Beth McConnell Baker: "One of [the] things that frustrates many with transliterations is there is no one way to spell things. It depends on which country did transliteration first.

In many countries the *ya* sound is *ja*, or *ia*. Thus, you may see ЯН as IAN, JAN, or YAN. First Class uses IAN, but it is pronounced YAN.”

Joe Bruns, Chairman of the AVSA Plant Registration and Master Plant List Committee, further clarifies: “The *International Code of Nomenclature (ICNCP)* requires that cultivar epithets (names) that are in an alphabet other than Latin should be transliterated using either the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* or the International Standards Organization (ISO) transliteration standards, but whichever method is used should be consistent within the same publication.

“The AVSA uses the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables*, readily available for free online, for both First Class and the AVML. Note that there are different *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* for the Russian and for the Ukrainian languages, but the differences are slight. The я character is transliterated as “ia” (pronounced “ya”). Sometimes you will see a Russian name with “iia,” which can be confusing. However, in English sometimes we pronounce “ia” as in Sonia (Russian я, transliterated to ia), and sometimes as in Maria (Russian ия, transliterated to iia),” says Joe.

Perplexed? You are not alone. That is precisely why these issues need to be addressed! Just focus on the idea of transliteration rather than translation and you will be headed in the right direction. When in doubt, contact the AVSA or an R/U hybridizer or grower for guidance. I have found all the R/U growers and hybridizers whom I have consulted to be friendly, patient, eager to help, and, without exception, pleased to be asked.

Naming for Shows

It is particularly important to ensure that properly transliterated R/U names accompany R/U African violet hybrids wherever they go because the R/U hybridizers do not make use of standardized descriptions in the same way that the AVSA does, relying instead upon photos to convey the characteristic traits of a particular variety. Without standardized descriptions to consult, R/U hybrids might be ineligible to show if the name chain has been broken.

Now, let’s see how all of this works: We start with a popular R/U hybrid named ПТ-Апрельский Денек.

Very few Americans, unless they speak Russian, will be able to make sense of the Cyrillic representation of this African violet’s name. The picture will no doubt become clearer if I tell you that, according to Google Translate, ПТ-Апрельский Денек means “A Day in April,” but we have just broken two of our promises — not to translate and not to leave out the name of the hybridizer. At this point, we would not even be correct to enter “A Day in April” in an AVSA show!

So, let’s straighten all of this out. If we add the hybridizer at the beginning and use the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* to transliterate (spell the Cyrillic words phonetically instead of translating), we come up with PT-Aprel’skiy Denek (the hybridizer’s initials, followed by a hyphen, followed by the name).

Building upon this new factually, culturally and politically correct transliteration, we can do a bit more research to learn that “PT” stands for the hybridizer Tatjana Pugacheva. By entering “Aprel’skiy Denek” into the Google Translate field from Russian to English (just type “translate Russian to English” into the Google search field and press “enter”), we confirm the central image as “April Day,” which lets us know what Tatjana Pugacheva (PT-) had in mind when she chose the name. This process does not offend or cross any cultural boundaries for the sake of our learning, as long as we keep our Google image to ourselves.

It is now time to talk about and share this gorgeous hybrid. We call our fellow African violet enthusiasts and say “Oh, you should see my ‘PEE-TEE-AY-PREL-SKY-DEN-EK’! That Tatjana Pugacheva really knows how to hybridize a showstopping African violet.” We might even want to enter it (correctly identified) in an AVSA show.

Employ transliteration rather than translation; remember to use the hybridizer’s initials; and keep those images you Googled to yourself. Then, your favorite R/U hybridizers will be happy to share their world and their work with you for years to come.



And the Winners Are ...

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

Email: winners@avsa.org

■ First AVS of Denton, TX — Winners:

- Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Heart and Soul, **Danny Tidwell.**
- Best Semiminiature: Hunter's Storm Clouds; Best Trailer: RS-Zimniy Tsvetok, **Glenda Curry.**
- Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Jan Johnson.**
- Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* USBRG 98-083, **Jill Reiss.**
- Best Design, **Janet Castiglione.**

■ Rocky Mountain AV Council, CO — Winners:

- Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Storm Watch, Cajun's Ma Cher Amie, Frozen in Time; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: N-Snezhnyi

Georgin, Jolly Devil, Rob's Slap Happy; Best Standard: Cajun's Cher Amie; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Estet'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Deb Carnevale.**

• 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Alliance, Buckeye Kindred Spirit, Psychedelic Moon; Best Miniature: Roller Rink; Best Species, S. 5b clone *confusa*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Susan Shaw.**

• Best Semiminiature: Denver Blues, **Trudy Brekel.**

Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

By Janet Riemer Pennington, New Jersey

Donations received in July and August 2020 Total: \$210

■ Two-tone — \$25-\$49

Betsey Branson
Glenn Chamulak
Columbus AVS

In memory of Nancy Carr

Ron and Jan Davidson

In memory of Barbara Kelly

First AVS of Dallas

In memory of Barbara Kelly

Two-tone (continued)

Angelina Grundhof
John Hesselberth
Carol Hixenbaugh
North Texas AV Judges Council

In memory of Barbara Kelly

Spring Branch AVC
Caroline Storey



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Alliance

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Exhibited by:

Catherine Thompson

Hybridized by: D. Croteau

Best in Show,

2006 National Show

Standard



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Jolly Orchid

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by H. Pittman

Hybridized in 2007,

Best Varieties in 2019 and 2020

WIN x SKI and Family

By Ronn Nadeau website: www.NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com

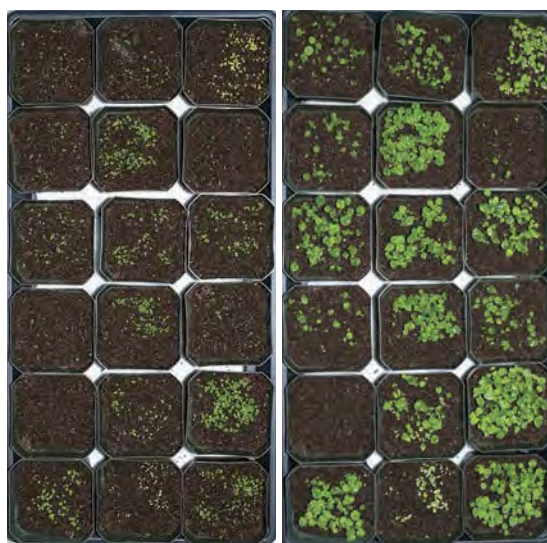
With lots of help from my wife, Katsuko, I run a small business producing and selling African violet seeds. In this article, I show how we test our seeds for the desirability of the plants into which they grow and the time it takes to go from sowing the seeds to evaluating the blooming plants. To do so, I used seeds from the cross WIN x SKI, in which WIN was the pod parent and SKI the pollen parent (Photos 1 and 2). All varieties used in my hybridizing and seed production have 3-letter names. This makes it possible to write the parentage of a cross on small Post-it flags that I attach to flower peduncles after pollinating them. Incidentally, SKI was produced from a cross of DAN x RAD, as explained in my article, "Looks Like a Chimera, But..." in *AVM*, January/February 2020, page 8.



Top, Photo 1: WIN, pod parent. Bottom, Photo 2: SKI, pollen parent.

Materials and Methods

On February 14, 2020, we sowed approximately 100 WIN x SKI seeds in a 3.5-inch pot containing a soilless germination mix. Seeds were sown on dampened PRO-MIX PGS seed germination mix. We transplanted the seedlings into PRO-MIX HP with mycorrhizae. We used square 2.5-inch and 3.5-inch pots (ITML brand) and 3-inch round pots (Pöppelmann brand). Our fertilizers were Jack's 15-16-17 Peat-Lite Special and Miracle-Gro 15-30-15. They were applied as solutions at concentrations of one-fourth to one-half teaspoon per gallon of reverse osmosis water generated by a home unit. The seedlings grew under LED lighting from 4-foot, 2-tube fixtures that ran for 12 hours per day. We enclosed the pot in a clear plastic sandwich bag and placed it in a tray with 17 other pots. The seeds began germinating 14 days after sowing and we photographed them at 20 and 58 days past sowing (Photos 3 and 4).



Left, Photo 3: 20 days past sowing (along with seedlings from other crosses). Right, Photo 4: 58 days past sowing (along with seedlings from other crosses).

Seedlings Produced

On April 13, 2020, we gently removed from the seed pot the WIN x SKI seedlings that were 58 days past sowing (Photo 5). We then teased them apart on a damp cloth and planted 16 of them in 2.5-inch pots.

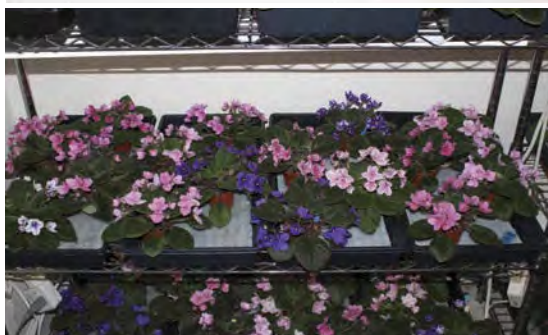


Photos 5 (top) through 8: Separating 16 seedlings and planting them in 2.5-inch pots.

All 16 seedlings chosen
to grow on for
evaluation ... survived.

We discarded the remaining seedlings. We then placed the 16 WIN x SKI seedling pots in one-half of a 10-20 tray, and 16 seedlings from another cross in the other half of the tray. The tray was covered with a transparent plastic dome and placed under white light LED tubes. We removed the dome 10 days later.

By May 29, which was 3.5 months after sowing, the 16 WIN x SKI plants were crowded in their half-tray, so we transferred them to their own tray (Photo 9). Nine days later, June 7, they were transplanted into 3-inch round pots and placed in two trays, each with eight plants. On July 3, we moved the budded or blooming plants to four trays on one shelf, thereby keeping all 16 WIN x SKI plants together for a photo (Photo 10). A peduncle was removed from each plant for Photo 11. They were evaluated on July 27, 2020.



Top, Photo 9: 16 WIN x SKI seedlings. Bottom, Photo 10: Win x SKI plants together for a photo shoot.



Photo 11: Peduncles removed from each cross.

Results

All 16 seedlings chosen to grow on for evaluation as adult plants survived to the end. All the offspring grew with flat rosette foliage. Twelve had pink flowers, two had purple, and two were bicolored. The blue pattern in the flowers of SKI showed up in only two of the offspring. Both parents in the cross had pansy-shaped flowers, and so did all their progenies, as expected. The female part of the cross, WIN, had nonvariegated foliage, and so did the offspring, which is normal. I chose three plants (Photo 12) for further work. Would they come true from leaves? And might they be fecund enough to use for seed production? If like past WIN x SKI and other seed crosses, I would have viable and popular seeds to sell to growers.

My next article will be about a cross that made several nice new varieties, including one named WAL, (Photo 13) which is being tested for trueness and fecundity.



Top, Photo 12: Three offspring plants chosen for further work. Bottom, Photo 13: Close-up of WAL, another cross offspring being tested.

Boyce Edens Research Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: \$150

Two-tone — \$25-\$49

Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI
Spring Branch AVC, Conroe, TX
Caroline Storey, San Marcos, TX

Thumbprint — Under \$25

Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Connie Cronin, Columbus, NE
Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL

Thumbprint (Continued)

Denise Rill, Hampstead, MD
Emilia Rykowski, Pompton Plains, NJ

Coming Events

Fall and winter African violet shows and sales still might be cancelled because of the COVID-19 virus. This list represents those shows still scheduled on our website as of September 30. Be sure to check the AVSA website Events page (www.avsa.org/events), search the local club on Facebook, or contact the organizers below for the latest information.

■ October 3 — Texas

Spring Branch African Violet Club
Plant sale

Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX
10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Teresa Kaminski: tckaminski@sbcglobal.net

■ November 7 — Oregon

Portland African Violet Association
Education/displays/sales
Portland Nursery
9000 SE Division
Portland, OR
10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Alice Wagner: 503-631-3925
alicemaebblue@yahoo.com

■ February 12-13, 2021 — Florida

First Lakeland African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Christ Lutheran Church
2715 Lakeland Hills Blvd.
Lakeland, FL
Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (sales); noon-5 p.m. (show)
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (show and sales)
Mary Jane DiLorenzo: 863-529-5420
www.firstlakelandafricanvioletsociety.com

■ February 26-27, 2021 — Florida

Tampa African Violet Society
Show and Sale
Fellowship Hall, Journey Christian Church
4207 North Boulevard, Tampa, FL
Friday: noon-5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mary Lou Harden: 813-924-2686
mlhard@verizon.net
www.tampafricanviolets.com

Building Maintenance Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: \$45

■ Two-tone — \$25-\$49

Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI

■ Thumbprint — Under \$25

Moonlight AVS, Fort Worth, TX



Family Portrait: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Lollipop'

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, Ohio

Email: melsgrice@gmail.com

Streptocarpus 'Bristol's Lollipop' is an example of one of my favorite gesneriads. This outstanding variety comes to us from Ralph Robinson (Rob) at the Violet Barn in New York. Semidouble white blooms with dark purple pencil-thin lines radiate from the throat onto the face. The plant always produces a bouquet of blooms above compact, flat-growing, medium-green foliage. It begins blooming at an early age so you must be careful to trim off early blooms so that it does not bloom itself to death before enough leaves grow. I know that this sounds painful to those wanting blooms, but you will be rewarded later with nearly constant blooming.

***Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Lollipop' Care**

Streptocarpus thrive in conditions that are similar to African violets. However, there are some differences. *Streptocarpus* need more light to flower well. Placing two T8 tubes or LEDs a little bit higher above the plants works well for me. Pale, bleached leaves mean that the plants are probably getting too much light if there is no nutrition problem. *Streptocarpus* can tolerate much cooler temperatures than African violets, but they grow and flower best at room temperature. They suffer when temperatures exceed 80 degrees, just like African violets.

Streptocarpus like to be fed with a commercial water-soluble fertilizer at the rate of one-eighth teaspoon per gallon of water every time you water. What is sold commercially as "tomato fertilizer" (18-18-21) works well for me. I use reverse-osmosis water to

avoid the buildup of salts in the potting mix. Many expert growers water their *streptocarpus* plants by hand — making sure to pour off any excess water that remains in the saucer that the plants have not absorbed. *Streptocarpus* do not grow in swamp-like conditions. They like to dry out a bit between waterings. *Streptocarpus* might get too dry and wilt a couple of times, but too many instances of leaf collapse will result in damaged leaves.

Potting *Streptocarpus*

I use an open potting mix (Pro-Mix HP) that has a lot of perlite (the nearly 40 percent in Pro-Mix, plus enough added to bring it to about 60 percent perlite). This allows for a lot of air circulation at the roots.



Streptocarpus 'Bristol's Lollipop', exhibited and photographed by Bob Clark.

Streptocarpus like to be potted high up in the pot so that the crown of leaves does not sit in water. Basically, make a "moat" around the crown. Repot

your plants often with fresh soil and they will reward you. Unfortunately, I seldom seem to get around to this as often as I should. But when I do, I am rewarded with a wealth of showy blooms.

The spectacular plant shown in the photo was grown and exhibited by Bob Clark at the Gesneriad Society 2020 Virtual Flower Show this year. See many other

well-grown and seldom-seen gesneriads on The Gesneriad Society website at www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2020-convention-st-petersburg-fl/2020-virtual-flower-show/

Thanks Rob and Olive Robinson for creating and distributing this wonderful hybrid!

Tips and Techniques: Wrapping a Wick

By Dale Martens

I recently had a sprouting *Sinningia*. I took these photos of how I wrapped the wick in the pot. These were taken with the camera pointing down on the top of the pot and show a newly cleaned and repotted sinningia tuber breaking dormancy with several new sprouts.

When wick watering using an acrylic or nylon wick to grow sinningias, have the top of the tuber within 1/2 inch of the rim of the pot. Wrap the wick around the tuber and add soil on top of the wick and tuber to expose just the tops of the sprouts to light. Never expose the wick to air because it will draw too much water.



Wick wrapped around the tuber.



Added soil covers the wick.



In Search of New Violets

By Dr. Jeff Smith

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Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

African violets can grow and flower year-round in our homes. In contrast, outdoor plants such as iris and tulips have a limited flowering season. Hybridizers of these plants have a brief window in which to plan and make their crosses. Some spend months planning how to make the maximum use of their plant material and time, trying to achieve a new success in hybridizing in just a few days or weeks. Then they must wait months for the seeds to mature and perhaps a few years for the seeds to germinate and for the new plants to grow and reach maturity. They can spend a great deal of time simply waiting to see whether their plants have amounted to anything.

I recently tried my hand at hybridizing Christmas cacti. It took three years from the cross to flowering F1 plants, and another three years to get flowering F2 plants. Patience and luck are virtues with hybridizing many types of plants.

We are fortunate that we can hybridize African violets at any time of year. Yes, it takes several months for the seed to mature and additional months for the seedlings to mature and flower, but a year's waiting time is a short investment in developing a new plant. If you find yourself with some extra time over the upcoming holidays, look over your plant material and try to envision how that type of bloom, in that color, would look combined with that type of foliage or that size of plant. Use your imagination and see what new kind of African violet you can hybridize. After all, we are always "In Search of New Violets."

Q: Is it possible to combine the thumbprint pattern with the wasp flower shape?

A: Yes, this would be an easy combination to achieve. The only concern is if the reduced size of the petals in a wasp flower shape will be big enough for the

thumbprint pattern to show up. The smaller petal size might make them look solid rather than being edged in white.

We are fortunate that
we can hybridize
African violets at any
time of year.

The cross would be easy to achieve because both traits are dominant. I would suggest crossing your favorite thumbprint flowered plant with a good wasp flower plant. Neither trait is inherited maternally, so it does not matter which parent is the seed parent or pollen parent. Since both are dominant traits, you should get a high percentage of thumbprint-wasp shaped flower plants in the next generation. Some of the other offspring should be thumbprint and non-wasp or solid colored and wasp flowered.

Q: Can the color of the seed be used to tell if the seeds are viable or not?

A: Viable African violet seeds usually are dark in color, typically a deep brown or black. I have noticed that they often are shiny as well. Seeds that are pale and appear fuzzy often are not viable.

Another test hybridizers use is to put the seeds on a folded piece of wax paper. Viable seeds tend to "roll," while non-viable seeds tend to "scoot" or slide. Many hybridizers find this a more reliable test of viability than seed color. Of course, the best test for viability is to plant the seeds. If they grow, they were viable.

Q: The pattern of the plant Kimi is very distinctive. Is the genetics of this pattern known?

A: At the time Kimi was released, several hybridizers attempted to reproduce the pattern in other colors. Most reported that the pattern did not show in the F1 generation. This was a surprise since most patterns in African violet flowers are dominant traits. The failure to show in the F1 generation would suggest the trait could be a recessive one. However, most hybridizers stopped at the F1 generation and did not continue to an F2 or backcross of an F1 to Kimi. That information would have been helpful to confirm that this flower pattern trait definitely is recessive.

Q: A cross of the species *S. shumensis* with Jolly Marvel (coral ruffled semi-double) produced offspring with very dark blue flowers. Where did the dark blue color come from?

A: The production of dark blue flowers in the F1 generation of that cross is a bit of a surprise. Blue is a dominant color to coral. However, with *S. shumensis* having very pale blue flowers, one might have anticipated light blue flowered offspring. Usually, a dominant gene that restricts the color in the offspring is responsible for control of color intensity. Evidently, the pale color of *S. shumensis* does not follow this pattern. The color of Jolly Marvel is an intense rich coral. This plant might have contributed to the dark or intense color of the offspring. Combine the color intensity with the dominance of blue flowers over coral flowers and the result could be dark blue flowers in the F1 offspring.

A cross of two F1 generation plants would produce mostly blue flowers in the F2 generation, but I would expect the color intensity to range from dark to medium, to perhaps a few pale colors like *S. shumensis*. Coral actually is a dark form of pink, so there should be some pinks in the F2 generation. A few coral-colored flowers also should be produced, but this would be a very rare outcome in the F2 generation.

You did not mention the foliage, but did the F1 offspring inherit the strawberry texture of *S. shumensis* foliage? Those raised dots with long hairs often inherit as a dominant trait when this species is used as a parent.

Q: I recently saw a post of what appeared to be variegated Clackamas foliage. Is that even possible?

A: Yes, it is possible. Clackamas foliage (also known as watermelon veins) is a difficult trait to work with as the plants are often difficult to grow and flower. However, the trait is a dominant foliage trait and would be passed on in the F1 generation. I am presuming that the seed parent was variegated and that the pollen parent had Clackamas foliage. The variegation would be inherited maternally to the seedlings. At least half of the seedlings would inherit the Clackamas foliage. The trait would be readily seen in the seedlings, so selection could occur very early, before the seedlings bloomed.

Clackamas foliage also tends to shrink the plant size. Most plants with this trait are miniatures. Some hybridizers have tried for standard-sized plants with this trait, but that has been difficult to achieve. Clackamas is also known for being very unruly in growth, so not many hybridizers have worked with this trait.

Q: Would it be possible to combine longifolia foliage with yellow flowers?

A: This is an interesting combination. Longifolia foliage is the easier trait to work with because it is a dominant trait and can be inherited from either the seed parent or pollen parent. Yellow flower color is still difficult to work with and the inheritance pattern for this color is still murky. I would try crossing a strong yellow-flowered plant with a plant with longifolia foliage and pale flowers, preferably any shade other than blue.

Blue flower color is the most dominant and the hardest to work around. Yellow flowers often are associated with whites, pinks and reds. I would think that any of these colors might allow yellow to present if one parent has strong yellow flowers. Once you have the longifolia foliage, keep breeding to these plants back to yellow-flowered plants to reinforce the chance for yellow flowers. It might take a couple of generations to get the yellow flowers back out and combined with the longifolia foliage. Good luck.

AVSA's Best Varieties List for 2020

By Trudy Brekel Littleton, Colorado

Phone: 303-452-9015 • Email: violetlady7@msn.com

The votes are in, and we have the list of the 25 best African violet varieties for 2020. Any African violet grower can participate in voting. This year, we had an excellent response to voting, especially from African violet growers who receive the *AVSA Growing Tips* newsletter. We had more votes come in from nonmembers this year who learned about the voting on AVSA social media sites. Here's hoping that those nonmembers decide to join AVSA.

The Best Varieties List helps growers learn about violet varieties that are easy and enjoyable to grow. Hybridizers with several cultivars on the Best Varieties List probably have plenty of other hybrids that growers will love.

There are always two ways you can choose to vote — by filling out the form available on the AVSA website and mailing it in, or through our online voting system. Voting for favorite 2021 varieties will close June 30, 2021. Watch for more 2021 voting information in future issues of *African Violet Magazine*, *AVSA Growing Tips* and on AVSA social media sites.

1. Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

•(8745) 07/27/1998 •P. Hancock

- Semidouble bright pink ruffled pansy/variable raspberry fantasy.
- Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy/red back. •Large standard (DAVS1624).

2. Ness' Crinkle Blue

•(8136) 01/19/1995 •D. Ness

- Double dark blue star/variable thin white edge.
- Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back.
- Semiminiature.

3. Precious Red

•(9724) 01/15/2007 •H. Pittman

- Semidouble-double dark red pansy.
- Dark green, plain/red back. •Miniature.

4. Jolly Orchid

•(9719) 01/15/2007 •H. Pittman

- Double orchid and white pansy.
- Medium green, plain, quilted.
- Miniature (TX Hyb, DAVS 1661).

5. Picasso

•(6924) 10/04/1988 •M. Tremblay

- Double light blue and white/variable white fantasy.
- Variegated medium green, plain/silver-green back.
- Large standard.

6. Buckeye Seductress

•(9669) 07/13/2006 •P. Hancock

- Double dark lavender star/wide white band, green edge.
- Variegated medium green and cream, plain.
- Large standard (DAVS 1632).

7. Blue Dragon

•(9516) 12/17/2005 •Lyndon Lyon

Greenhouses/P. Sorano

- Double light blue large frilled star/raspberry edge.
- Dark green, plain/red back. •Large standard.

8. Rob's Boolaroo

•(8053) 03/05/1994 •R. Robinson

- Semidouble light pink sticktite pansy/bright blue fantasy.
- Medium green, quilted. •Semiminiature trailer.

9. Rob's Vanilla Trail

•(9296) 11/21/2003 •R. Robinson

- Double cream to blush white pansy.
- Dark green, quilted, serrated, pointed.
- Semiminiature trailer.

10. Buckeye Nostalgia

•(10484) 01/05/2012 •P. Hancock

- Semidouble pale blue ruffled pansy.
- Variegated medium green and cream.
- Standard (DAVS 1753).

11. Frozen In Time

•(9167) 02/03/2003 •Lyndon Lyon

Greenhouses/Sorano

- Single-semidouble white pansy/variable lavender tinge; green edge.
- Variegated light green and ivory, quilted.
- Standard.

12. Jersey Snow Flakes

•(9820) 12/14/2007 •R. Kurzynski

- Single-semidouble white pansy/white sparkle overlay.
- Variegated medium green and white, plain quilted.
- Standard.

13. Powwow

•(7708) 06/15/1992 •K. Stork

- Semidouble red pansy.
- Variegated green and cream, plain. •Standard.

14. Rose Boutique

•(9028) 04/12/2001 •G.T. Smith

- Double pink frilled star/darker eye.
- Variegated medium green, pink and white, plain, quilted. •Standard.

15. The Alps

•(7813) 10/03/1992 •K. Horikoshi/H Sawara

- Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/light blue stripe.
- Medium green, plain, quilted. •Standard.

16. Carolina Elegant Affair

•(10913) 07/31/2017 •L. Abplanalp

- Single-semidouble white ruffled star/pink patches.
- Variegated medium green and white, quilted, wavy.
- Standard.

17. Edge of Darkness

•(10677) 03/19/2014 •Paul Sorano/

Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

- Semidouble dark purple star/frilled white edge.
- Variegated dark green and ivory, serrated/red back.
- Large standard.

18. Hunter's Kashmir

•(11227) 07/17/2019 •K. Muzalewski

- Semidouble lavender frilled pansy/purple edge.
- Variegated dark green and cream, ruffled.
- Large standard.

19. LE-Karusel'

•(11024) 05/24/2018 •E. Lebetkaia

- Single white large ruffled star/red patches.
- Variegated medium green and white serrated.
- Standard.

20. Pixie Blue

•(2598) 09/16/1974 •L. Lyon

- Single purple-blue/darker center.
- Plain, ovate. •Miniature trailer.

21. Kentucky Gooseberries

•D. Rollins

- Double white star/light pink blush.
- Medium green, serrated.
- Semiminiature (DAVS 1602).

22. Rebel's Splatter Kake

•(8695) 01/31/1998 •R. Bann

- Single-semidouble pink large fluted star/darker eye, purple fantasy, white-green edge.
- Medium green, spooned, quilted, glossy, serrated/red back. •Large standard.

23. Rob's Chilly Willy

•(9461) 07/30/2005 •R. Robinson

- Double silver-white star/medium blue overlay, edge. •Crown variegated medium green and white, pointed. •Miniature.

24. Rob's Fuddy Duddy

•(7886) 06/02/1993 •R. Robinson

- Semidouble dark mauve-purple sticktite pansy.
- Dark green, quilted. •Semiminiature.

25. Tiger

•(3433) 06/01/1978 •I. Fredette

- Semidouble dark blue-violet.
- Variegated. •Large standard.

AVSA Honor Roll of African Violets

By Trudy Brekel

Phone: 303-452-9015 • Email: violetlady7@msn.com

Congratulations to the winners of this year's Honor Roll. Two plants made the Honor Roll of African Violets this year. Both are beautiful standards. To be on the Honor Roll of African Violets, a variety must have appeared in the Best Varieties list for three consecutive years.

We had something unusual happen this year. Tiger was on the Best Varieties list for the past 3 years, however, since it was on the Honor Roll back in 1984, it does not qualify to be on the Honor Roll again. This goes to show that even the vintage violets still are popular and can be a Best Variety.

■ 2000

- Powwow #7708 •(K. Stork)
- Rob's Sticky Wicket (6467) •(R. Robinson)

■ 2001

- Windy Day #7719 •(Stork/Boone)

■ 2002

- There were no 2002 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2003

- Rainbow's Quiet Riot •(R. Wasmund)

■ 2004

- Frozen In Time #9167 •(S. Sorano)
- Orchard's Bumble Magnet #8479 •(R. Wilson)

■ 2005

- Rebel's Splatter Kake #8695 •(R. Bann)

■ 2006

- There were no 2006 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2007

- ACA's Red Ember #8732 •(J. Brownlie)

■ 2008

- Blue Dragon #9516 •(L. Lyon Greenhouses/
P. Sorano)

■ 2009

- Bob Serbin #8292 •(J. Brownlie)

■ 2010

- There were no 2010 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2011

- Plumberry Glow #9187 •(L. Lyon Greenhouses/
P. Sorano)

■ 2012

- There were no 2012 additions to the Honor Roll

■ 2013

- Harbor Blue #6174

■ 2014

- Rob's Chilly Willy #8170 •(R. Robinson)
- Rob's Fuddy Duddy #7886 •(R. Robinson)

■ 2015-2017

- There were no additions these years to the Honor Roll

■ 2018

- Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler #8745 •(P. Hancock)
- Buckeye Seductress #9669 •(P. Hancock)
- Precious Red #9724 •(H. Pittman)
- Rob's Boolaroo #8053 •(R. Robinson)

■ 2019

- Jersey Snow Flakes #9820 •(R. Kurzynski)
- Buckeye Nostalgia #10484 •(P. Hancock)
- Jolly Orchid #9719 •(H. Pittman)
- Kentucky Gooseberries •(D. Rollins)

■ 2020

- The Alps #7813 •(K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara)
- Edge of Darkness #10677 •(Paul Sorano/
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Precious Red

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by: H. Pittman

Hybridized in 2007, Best Varieties, 2020

Miniature



Registration Report

By Joe Brunns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

■ Dogan Uygun — Karabaglar-Izmir, Turkey

M. Bir Numara

- (11284) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Single plum-pink two-tone pansy.
- Variegated dark green and white, quilted.
- Miniature.

M. Çilli

- (11285) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Single-semidouble light pink large star/blue fantasy.
- Medium green, plain. •Standard.

M. Gece Efsanesi

- (11286) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Single red sticktite pansy/blue shading on ruffled edge.
- Dark green, quilted. •Standard.

M. Göbeklitepe

- (11287) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Double pink star/white edge.
- Medium green, ovate, spooned. •Standard.

M. Izmir Gelini

- (11288) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Semidouble-double pink frilled pansy.
- Dark green, quilted. •Standard.

M. Mavi Elmas

- (11289) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Semidouble dark blue star/white markings.
- Variegated dark green, white and yellow.
- Standard.

M. Mor Lale

- (11290) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Single light blue frilled bell.
- Medium green, ovate. •Small standard.

M. Mor Sultan

- (11291) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Single-semidouble light pink frilled pansy/mauve eye, mauve and blue fantasy.
- Variegated medium green, yellow, pink and white wavy girl foliage. •Semiminiature.

M. Mor Sünbül

- (11292) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Semidouble-double fuchsia ruffled star/blue edge.
- Dark green, plain. •Standard.

M. Pembe Prensesin Dansi

- (11293) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Double pink frilled star.
- Variegated medium green, white and pink, plain.
- Small standard.

M. Pembe Rüya

- (11294) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Double pink large frilled star.
- Variegated light green, yellow and pink.
- Standard.

M. Sisli Puslu

- (11295) 07/04/2020 •D. Uygun
- Double blue star/pink and white puff fantasy.
- Dark green, quilted, serrated. •Semiminiature.

■ Pat Hancock — Middletown, OH

Buckeye Envious Smile

- (11296) 07/04/2020 •P. Hancock
- Semidouble lavender pansy/purple band, variable green-white edge.
- Variegated dark green and cream, plain, glossy.
- Large.

Buckeye Kurteous Attitude

- (11297) 07/04/2020 •P. Hancock
- Double lavender large ruffled star/purple fantasy.
- Variegated dark green, cream and pink, glossy/red back. •Large.

■ Registration Change

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

Buckeye Summer Song

- (9729) — Add “variable” to blossom edge description (*variable* white-green edge).

Remove “ruffled” from the foliage descriptions of:
Buckeye Camera Ready (11270)
Buckeye Kiss ‘n’ Tell (11278)

Buckeye Main Squeeze (11280)
Buckeye Real Deal (11281)
Buckeye Ruby Ripples (11283)



Shows and Judges Committee

By Mary J. Corondan, Chair

Email: judges@avsa.org

As the pandemic continues to require social distancing, most shows for 2020 and the beginning of 2021 have been canceled. There have been no judging schools available to attend and very few shows where blue ribbons could be earned.

For student and advanced judges, your judge's certification will not expire from 2020 until further notice. Your certification will be extended. When shows and judging schools are offered once again, you will be notified of your certification expiration date.

For those of you taking your first senior judge's exam, schedules from only **three** (rather than five) AVSA approved (affiliate or convention) shows signed by the show or judge's chair will be required to qualify for the examination during the pandemic. Proof of three blue ribbons will be waived until further notice.

If you are currently a senior judge, please continue to take your senior exam on schedule. Proof of three blue ribbons earned will be waived until you are

notified otherwise. If you continue to take the senior judge's exam when due and make a score of at least a 93, your certificate will not expire.

Thank you for your flexibility. Please keep in mind that these are temporary adjustments during the COVID-19 pandemic. You will be kept up to date when changes occur. Continue to read the Shows and Judges column for the latest information and review the Handbook regularly. Every attempt will be made to be as fair as possible to all of you who are continuing to pursue your judging goals.

Since there are no shows anytime soon, I have let my plants bloom continuously. During this time of isolation, I have thoroughly enjoyed their beauty. Every few days, I place a different violet or other gesneriad on the kitchen island and breakfast table. What beauty violets add to the home.

Contest Entry —

Making a Move

By Nancy A. Nash Glendora, California

Several years ago, I wanted to embrace my mother's hobby of growing African violets. She had five standards in the living room window for as long as I can remember. I always had one or two in a window, in terra-cotta pots marked by the salts from hard water, and I liked the look. While living in the Portland, Oregon, area, I researched and found the local club. They are a great group of friendly men and women with a wealth of knowledge — and generous! They throw a “leaf shower” for all new members and offer encouragement.

Soon, I had 75 to 100 different named leaf starts and the next thing I knew, I had two racks of plants on wick watering with lights! Kentucky Gooseberry, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rebel's Rose Bud, and many others did very well for me. I love the different kinds of leaves — variegated and ruffled, plus girl's and spoon shapes. The contrast of the leaf colors with the flowers seems to complement the blooms perfectly. Except Ann; for some reason, she hates me.



The Alps, my first chimera.

Readying to Relocate

In 2017 my husband and I readied to move back to Southern California after 25 years. I gave up for

adoption most of my lovelies and filled the pods with our belongings to move. I put about 10 plants in an under-the-bed type container, made sure they were damp, but not wet, and sealed them up. I put them at the top of the pod near the translucent roof so they'd get a little light.

... the enameled
self-watering pots
that kept plants too
wet in Oregon worked
great in Southern
California.

Three months later, the pod was delivered and I anxiously opened the box of plants. Life! I lost two, but the rest were fine. I set them up in the windowsill in the kitchen and on a table in the guest room. My club sent me a bunch of leaves and I was ready to get started! I planned to use natural light instead of plant lights. I potted them up and waited.

Setting Up in a New Region

The first issue I had to address in our new home was the water, which is hard and has chloramine. In addition, the air is a lot drier. I changed my planting mixture to include a little less perlite. Some plants did well and others did not. Kentucky Gooseberries and Live Wire died. I struggled with leaves rotting and blossoms falling off before they opened (plus the cat sometimes nibbles the buds off). Having several different types of pots, I soon realized that small

terra-cotta pots did not hold enough moisture and that the enameled self-watering pots that kept plants too wet in Oregon worked great in Southern California. (I drill a hole in the bottom of the inner pot and empty the extra water out about an hour after filling.)

Now I keep only the varieties that enjoy my climate and my care. I like standards. Once again, I have killed Ann, even though I bought two! Happy Harold and Fisherman's Paradise are quite happy. The Alps is my first happy chimera. I look forward to collecting at least one plant from as many hybridizers as I can: Buckeye, Cajun, Rob's, Wesley's, and a space violet from Optimara. When the pandemic allows, I want to find a group to join in my area.

I don't know if I will try to grow Ann again, because I'm a little bitter. It's been a few years of many

changes and helping my plants adapt, but African violets give me peace and joy.



Fisherman's Paradise.



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Hybridizing Rivermist African Violets

By Joan Barnick Baker Thief River Falls, Minnesota

I grow my violets and live in northern Minnesota, near the Canadian border. I chose the prefix for my “Rivermist” violet names partly from the city in which I live (Thief River Falls) as I love things/pictures with a misty, ethereal look to them. My love for African violets came from my grandmother, who always had her dining room table full of them, sitting in an east window. I remember one time, when she had to show me her new violet ... a pink one! This might have been back in the early 1960s. She was so proud of that plant.

Returning to Violets

Life moves on ... I married, had a son, divorced and went to work. Then, on a visit to see my grandmother in the mid-1970s, I became very interested in them again. This time, she showed me how to start plants from leaves, remove suckers and repot plants. She also gave me three plants ... one with purple blooms, plus a lavender and a blue-purple bloom (which I still have). After that, I purchased a few plants at our local store and had one shelf with about 10 plants ... just Optimara and Rhapsodie.

Hybridizing Start

I decided to try hybridizing after reading about it in a book from the library. That worked out well for me and soon I had about 50 to 70 seedlings growing! Now what to do with all those? I was disappointed with them because I had been hoping for a wide assortment of colors, but got only solid blue, purple or an occasional white/blush color. Later, I saw an ad in a gardening magazine for African violet leaves and plants. So, I sent for a catalog and was spellbound by the descriptions. These were not common, ordinary violets, but rainbows of color in blooms and even some variegated foliage. Not having a lot of money to spend on these, I purchased leaves from a lady in California. Soon I had lots of violets and was buying or making more shelves as fast as I could.

I decided to try
hybridizing after
reading about it in a
book from the library.

Joining AVSA and the Online World

In the early 1990s, I joined the African Violet Society of America and an African violet club down in Minneapolis. But being 300 miles away, I soon left the club, because I could never make it to the meetings and it was difficult to communicate without the Internet. After getting my first computer in 1999, I found online violet web pages, eBay and Yahoo groups to join. I started trading and shipping leaves, which “turned” into eBay selling after a couple years. I have now been an eBay seller for more than 20 years, selling my extra starter plants and leaves.

In 1993, I bought my home and moved from my “trailer house” to a real house! It had a nice, dry, warm basement that was ideal for African violets. I started buying more shelves, lights, etc., and set up my basement growing area. In 2003 to 2004, I started growing and propagating chimeras by cutting the crown off and harvesting the suckers. They were selling very well on eBay and I sold them as fast as I could grow them. I grew in my basement for the first 20 years, until I cut back on the number of plants and moved them up to my plant room for easier access. I don’t have as much room in my plant room and I am filling it up with a lot of my hybrids, while keeping other varieties to use in my hybridizing plans.

Ramping Up Hybridizing

After retiring from work at Digi-Key Corporation in 2014, I decided it was time to hybridize again. I crossed Geyser of Color with Heinz's Seduction in February 2015 and sowed those seeds. They started blooming by the time they were a year old. I had 25 plants from that cross and I registered 12 of them around 2018. That was an amazing cross, with so many unusual colors ... most with the "puff" fantasy markings!

I donate my "unwanted ones" from crosses to our local Animal Humane Society Gift Store. Since they all are variegated, they sell fast and everyone is happy with them. I was kept very busy with these, as I put down leaves, recorded the information, took photos of their progress, etc. I only had three crosses in 2017 ... saving only five varieties to grow out and register. I was so lucky with my first cross, but these were crosses with those first siblings and many looked the same as their parents, so I didn't keep most of them. In 2019, I had nine different crosses with a lot more colors, ruffles and other variations. I also have three "chimera types" that I am growing out to verify. I have the first suckers potted up and growing nicely, with more on the way.

This spring I had pollinated quite a few blooms and I now have seedpods that I am very hopeful for! Many of those are dried now, but I might sow a few of them in the next few months. Hopefully, they are fertile?

Registering Sports and Crosses

The first plant I registered was Rivermist Watercolor, a sport of Lacy Red. The flowers have wonderful bright green, ruffled edges. These five registered plants were produced by my first cross: Rivermist Galaxy, Rivermist Beguiling, Rivermist Pearls, Rivermist Psycho and Rivermist Zombie. All the plants are standards.

- Rivermist Galaxy (10973) has single-semidouble blue-purple large star/white puff fantasy, pink and red streaks. The foliage is variegated dark green with a pink, ovate, quilted, glossy/variable white-spotted red back.

- Rivermist Beguiling (10971) has single-semidouble medium red-pink large ruffled star/white puff fantasy. Foliage is variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted.

I had 25 plants from that cross and I registered 12 of them around 2018.

- Rivermist Pearls (10974) has single-semidouble light pink star/white puff fantasy. The foliage is variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted, glossy/variable white-spotted red back.

- Rivermist Psycho (10975) has single-semidouble red-purple large star/white puff fantasy. Variegated medium green and pink, ovate, quilted, serrated.



Two of the five registered plants from my first cross. Top: Rivermist Beguiling. Bottom: Rivermist Pearls.

•Rivermist Zombie (10986) has single-semidouble. blue-purple large star/white puff fantasy, dark pink streaks. Its foliage is variegated dark green, cream and pink, round, quilted/variable white-spotted red back.



Another of the registered plants from my first cross:
Rivermist Zombie.

Dr. Jeff Smith wrote an article in the July-August 2020 issue of *AVM* (Volume 73, Number 4, page 39) on the color features of some plants of my first cross, as “triple fantasy” with two different colors and fantasy types, plus the light-colored “puff” spots on the leaf backs. Rivermist Zombie is an example of triple fantasy.

Most of my later crosses have my hybrid plants or their siblings for one of the parents. A few examples are Rivermist Zeeva, Rivermist Blizzard and Rivermist Oohlala.



Later crosses include Rivermist Zeeva, Rivermist Blizzard and Rivermist Oohlala.

AVSA Booster Fund

By Dianna Walston Kokomo, Indiana

Donations received May 2020 through August 2020 Total: \$1175

■ Geneva — \$100-\$499

Jeri Anderson, Tucson, AZ
Memphis AVS, Arlington, TN
Tampa AVS, Glenn Shelton, Brandon, FL
*In memory of Lynee Wilson,
Therese Lyham, and Betty Wise*

■ Multicolor — \$50-\$99

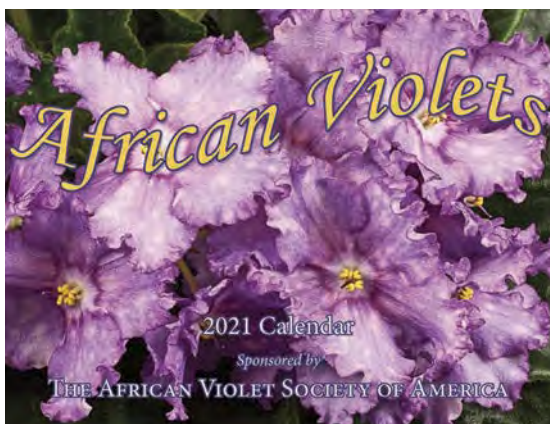
Bonnie Harris, North Richland Hills, TX
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Heartland AVC, Sebring, FL
In memory of Shirley Berger
Randy McMahill, Ankeny, IA

■ Two-Tone — \$25-\$49

Carol Ann Burrell, Sebring, FL
In memory of Shirley Berger
Barbara Conrad, Encinitas, CA
In memory of Dottie Sevel
Cross Town AVC, Fitchburg, WI
Patty Daniel, Winfield, KS
In memory of Barbara Kelly
Linda Garramone, Bay Shore, NY
Donna Mosher, Grove City, OH
Cheryl Riedl, Bellaire, TX
Sylvia Row, Redwood City, CA
Spring Branch AVC, Karla Ross, Conroe, TX
Jill Stern, Deer Park, NY

■ Thumbprint — Under \$25

Donna Becker, San Antonio, TX
Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Leslie Breen, Houston, TX
Amy Cash-Allison, Somonauk, IL
Brenda Dutta, Basking Ridge, NJ
Rowena Scott Comegys, Shreveport, LA
Lorene Connel, Sparks, NV
Colin Dimon, Vestal, NY
Albert Dodson, Lancaster, PA
Brenda Dutta, Basking Ridge, NJ
Christy Grover, Independence, IA
Angelina Grundhof, Gulfport, FL
Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA
Janice Murray, New York, NY
Veronica Novotney, Menor, OH
In memory of Dottie Sevel
Stan Raugh, Temple, PA
Janice Sorensen, Castle Rock, CO
In memory of Bill Foster
Peg Clover Stipek, Denver, CO
Betty Tillman, Fort Worth, TX
Mary L. Vasconcelles, Springfield, IL



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Georgia: The Peach State

By Kathy Spissman Atlanta, Georgia

Georgia is best known as “The Peach State.” This recognizes Georgia-grown peaches, which are renowned for their superior flavor, texture, appearance and nutritious qualities. Georgia also designated the peach as the official state fruit in 1995 and the peach is featured on the Georgia quarter, but we also have an abundance of talent among native Georgians and Atlantans. You will recognize some in the list below right away, and others might surprise you.

James Earl Carter Jr.

Born October 1, 1924, James Earl (Jimmy) Carter served as the 39th President of the United States from 1977 to 1981. He is an American politician, philanthropist, and former farmer who served as a Georgia State Senator from 1963 to 1967 and as the 76th Governor of Georgia from 1971 to 1975. Since leaving the presidency, Carter has remained engaged in political and social projects as a private citizen; in 2002, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in co-founding the Carter Center. The Carter Center has helped mediate conflicts in countries



Former President Jimmy Carter at the Carter Center. Photo by Atlanta Mayor's Office and Courtesy of ACVB and AtlantaPhotos.com.

around the world. He and his wife, Rosalynn, also have helped build more than 4,000 homes for Habitat for Humanity since 1984. Carter is the longest-lived president, the longest-retired president, the first to live 40 years after his inauguration, and the first to reach the age of 95.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Born Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929 and living until April 4, 1968, King was an American Christian minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. King is best known for advancing civil rights through non-violence and civil disobedience.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Image courtesy of Pixabay.

Hank Louis Aaron

Born February 5, 1934, in Mobile, Alabama, Hank Aaron later was nicknamed “Hammer” or “Hammerin’ Hank” as an American Major League Baseball (MLB) right fielder. The hall of famer still serves as the senior vice president of the Atlanta Braves. Aaron played 21 seasons for the Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves and two seasons for the Milwaukee Brewers. Aaron held the MLB record for career home runs for 33

years, and he still holds several MLB offensive records. He hit 24 or more home runs every year from 1955 through 1973 and is one of only two players to hit 30 or more home runs in a season at least 15 times.

Asa Griggs Candler

Asa Griggs Candler, the founder of Coca-Cola, was working as a druggist and manufacturer of patented medicines in 1888 when he met John Stith Pemberton and was intrigued by a sweet, carbonated drink Pemberton had developed. Candler bought the Coca-Cola recipe from Pemberton, for an amount rumored to be \$2,300. The drink, which was touted as a tonic and headache remedy, was made up of brewed coca leaves, caffeine, carbonated water, and sugar. In 1892, he founded the Coca-Cola Company. The following year, he trademarked the brand and distributed the first dividends to the company's shareholders. Candler lived from 1851 to 1929.

Samuel Truett Cathy

Born in Eadonton, Georgia, in 1921, Samuel Truett Cathy became a businessman, investor, author and philanthropist. In 1946, he founded the Chick-fil-A restaurant chain in an Atlanta suburb called Hapeville. The now-national chain has more than 2,400 restaurants around the country and was the first restaurant to pair shopping and eating by placing a location in an Atlanta mall. Cathy died in 2014 and his son Dan now serves as CEO of the company, which has its corporate headquarters in Atlanta.

Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell

Margaret Mitchell was born in Atlanta on November 8, 1900, and lived there when she died on August 16, 1949. She was an American novelist and journalist. Mitchell wrote only one novel, the American Civil War-era novel "Gone With the Wind," for which she won the National Book Award for Most Distinguished Novel of 1936 and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1937.



The typewriter used by the author at Atlanta's Margaret Mitchell House.
Photo courtesy ACVB Marketing.

Robert Edward "Ted" Turner

Ted Turner is an American media owner, producer and philanthropist. He founded the Cable News Network (CNN), which was the first 24-hour cable news channel and still is headquartered in Atlanta. He began his media work after inheriting his father's billboard business in the 1960s and founded a local Atlanta station in 1970. In the 1980s, he acquired movie studio MGM's library of 2,200 films. Turner is a supporter of the environment and once was the largest landowner in the United States, using much of his land around the country to raise bison.

These directors, actors, musicians and writers also hail from Georgia:

Spike Lee, Film Director

Jeff Foxworthy, Comedian

DeForest Kelley, Doctor on the original Star Trek

Julia Roberts, Actress

Ryan Seacrest, TV and radio personality

Gladys Knight, Soul Singer

Brenda Lee, Country Singer

Usher, Singer-songwriter, dancer and actor

This is just a sampling of the famous people from The Peach State.

We are all looking forward to all the gifted African Violet growers and designers who will display their talents as we celebrate our 75th year at "AVSA Diamond Jubilee-Celebrating African Violets Through The Years" May 30 through June 6, 2021, in Atlanta.

2021 AVSA Convention Awards, Atlanta, GA: Our 75th Anniversary Convention and Show

By Sharon Gartner svioletlady@gmail.com

Hello, it is your Awards Chair, Sharon Gartner. Let's celebrate our 75th Anniversary in style! I just want to say how much I missed seeing everyone this year and hope to really celebrate our wonderful hobby together next year. We are just going to bring all the awards we collected for the Arkansas show forward to the Atlanta show.

I want to thank all those individuals, clubs, councils and commercial members who have already given so generously. It is your generosity that makes the show so special and gives the winners that extra incentive to show every year. The Convention Show Awards could not be possible without your help. If your name, club or council is not on this list, don't worry. There is plenty of time to donate to the 2021 awards fund. Please send your check or money order to:

AVSA Office, Awards

P.O. Box 22417
Beaumont, TX 77720

There are many ways to donate. You can give a **specific donation** in remembrance of a special person. You can ask that the money be assigned to a specific variety that they loved to grow or give it as an **undesigned award**.

Growers can look at the awards listing and take note of the varieties that have specific awards assigned. They can then grow those violets in hopes of bringing them to the show and getting an extra award!

If you don't have the variety that has a specific award assigned to it, you could make a list and do a little shopping at the convention!

Any award can be donated as an undesigned award, to be used where needed. This option is best; the funds are sure to be used for awards. For instance, for Best in Class, we have more than 100

classes, or AVSA collection awards, etc. Just make a note on the awards form, which can be found on the www.avsa.org website under the Convention tab.

Awards are a way to give our growers the extra incentive to bring beautiful show plants.

A list of the current awards is now on the AVSA website at www.avsa.org, under the Convention tab. All **undesigned awards** will be used in either the amateur or commercial horticultural or design categories. Although every attempt has been made to list the awards correctly, mistakes happen. However, we reserve the right to modify or change these listings. Please do not hesitate to contact me, at svioletlady@gmail.com.

Let's make this a great convention with awards!!!

■ Specified Awards — Amateur Division Collection

- \$300 Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$100 3rd Best Holtkamp Collection
Holtkamp Greenhouses
Reinhold Holtkamp (TN)
- \$200 Best Robinson Collection
The Violet Barn
Dr. Ralph and
Olive Robinson (NY)
- \$100 Second Best Robinson Collection
The Violet Barn
Dr. Ralph and Olive Robinson (NY)
- \$300 Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)

\$200 Second Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)

\$100 Third Best Buckeye Collection
Pat Hancock (OH)

\$300 Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

\$200 2nd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

\$100 3rd Best Russian Collection
Tatiana and Vladimir Kalgin (Russia)

\$200 Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)

\$100 2nd Best Lyon's Collection
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses
Paul Sorano (NY)

\$200 Best Hunter's Hybrid
Collection, Standard
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

\$75 2nd Best Hunter's Hybrid
Collection, Standard
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

\$200 Best Hunter's Hybrid Collection,
Mini/Semimini
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

\$75 2nd Best Hunter's Hybrid
Collection Mini/Semimini
Ken Muzalewski (TX)

\$250 Best Cajun's Collection
Dr. Minh Bui (MD)

■ **Specific Variety Awards —
Amateur Horticulture**

\$50 Bill Foster Memorial
Bill Foster (TX)

\$25 Best Aca's Libby
Bluebird Greenhouse
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)

\$50 Best Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler
Cincinnati AVS (OH)

\$50 Best Buckeye Seductress
Pat Hancock (OH)

\$25 Best Cabbage Patch
Terri Post (IA)

\$25 Best Cajun's Code Blue
Karen Buchanan (TN)

\$100 Best Concord
Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

\$50 Best Del's Spring Blush
In memory of Del Setchel
Violet Reflections Group (IN)

\$25 Best Everdina
AVSA, Mary Corondan (TX)

\$25 Best Hunter's Exit Wound
Karen Buchanan (TN)

\$25 Best Hunter's Kashmir
Karen Buchanan (TN)

\$25 Best Janet (Maas)
Janet Riemer (NJ)

\$25 Best Jersey Snowflakes
AVC of Morris County (NJ)

\$50 Best Jitterbug Breathless
Cincinnati AVS (OH)

\$25 Best LE-Karusel
Starz N Streps
Steve and Donna Turner (SC)

\$50 Best Lela Marie
Early Bird Violet Club (AL)

\$25 Best Lonestar Helen Mahr
Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

\$25 Best Lonestar Lady
Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

\$25 Best Lonestar Snowstorm
Tom and Marge Savage (TX)

\$25 Best Lonestar Twilight
Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

\$25 Best Lyon's Rockin' Romance
Cathleen Graves (WA)

\$20 Best Marching Band
In memory of Kent Stork
Karyn Cichocki (NJ)

\$35 Best Ozark Sinningia
Dave's Violets
David Harris (MO)

\$100 Best Rodeo Country
Spring Branch AVC (TX)

\$25 Best Sailor Boy
In honor of Judy Carter
Mike and Debbie McInnis (IN)

\$100 Best The Alps
Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)

\$25 Best Tina (Maas)
Janet Rieer (NJ)

- \$25 Best Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier
Bluebird Greenhouse
Tom and Libbie Glembocki (NC)
- \$25 BIC yellow blossom/any foliage
Janet Fox (CA)
- \$25 Best in Class 48
Copper State AVC (AZ)
- \$25 Best Other Gesneriad,
Fibrous Rooted, in Bloom other than
Streptocarpus/Streptocarpella
Richard Carr (OH)
- \$25 Best Semiminiature
Cathleen Graves (WA)

■ **Specific Design Awards — Amateur Division**

- \$35 Best Natural Garden
Janet Fox (CA)
- \$35 Best Dish Garden
Janet Fox (CA)
- \$35 Best Terrarium
Janet Fox (CA)
- \$50 Best Underwater Design
In memory of Rosemary White
North Coast Gesneriad and AVC (OH)

■ **Undesignated — Amateur Horticulture**

- \$25 Alice Brown (AR)
- \$50 Cedar Valley Club (IA)
- \$25 Central Arkansas AVS (AR)
- \$25 Magic Knight AVS (TX)
- \$100 Mary Corondan (TX)
- \$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
- \$100 Richard and Anne Nicholas (TX)
- \$25 Richmond AVS (VA)

■ **Undesignated — Design Division**

- \$50 Kathy Lahti (MN)

■ **Undesignated — Amateur**

- \$50 1st Austin AVS (TX)
- \$25 African Violet Council of
Southern California (CA)
- \$50 African Violet Society of Minnesota (MN)
- \$25 Albuquerque AVC (NM)
- \$50 AVS of Greater Tulsa (OK)
- \$25 AVS of Tulsa (OK)
- \$25 Barb Lafashia (DE)
- \$53 Brent T. Johnson (OH)
- \$15 Bonnie Harris (MN)

- \$25 Carol Burris (AZ)
- \$10 Chelsea Tidwell (AR)
- \$25 Danny Tidwell (AR)
- \$35 Dave's Violets – David Harris (MO)
- \$25 Delaware African Violet and
Gesneriad Society (DE)
- \$50 Dolores Gibbs (TX)
- \$100 Dr. William E. H. Price (BC, Canada)
- \$10 Elvie Blakely (FL)
- \$50 Heart of Jacksonville AVS (FL)
- \$25 Janice Davidson (TX)
- \$15 Jeff Smith (IN)
- \$25 Jo Ann Schrimsher (TX)
- \$25 Joan Wood (CA)
- \$19 Judith M. Carter (OK)
- \$50 Judith M. Carter (OK)
- \$50 Kathy Lahti (MN)
- \$25 Laura Perdomo – The Peacock Cottage (FL)
- \$25 Leonard Re (CA)
- \$50 Lincoln AVS (NE)
- \$50 Linda and Albert Hall (MO)
- \$20 Linda Scott (NM)
- \$20 Lola Sutherland (CA)
- \$275 Lone Star AV Council Convention Fund (TX)
- \$50 Marge and Bill Farrand (MI)
- \$25 Memphis AVS (TN)
- \$25 Missouri Valley AVC (SD)
- \$25 North Star AV Council (MN)
- \$100 Ohio State AVS
In memory of Bill Foster (OH)
- \$25 San Diego County AVS (CA)
- \$50 Sharon Gartner (FL)
- \$25 Sherrie Wallace (OK)
- \$100 Tucson AVS (AZ)
- \$50 The Tidewater AVS (VA)
- \$25 Tri-Counties AVS (CA)
- \$25 Tustana AVS (CA)

Celebrating 75 Years



Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland St. NE | Atlanta, GA 30303

Sunday, May 30, 2021 ~ Sunday, June 6, 2021

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021

Show and Salesroom open to the public
9am to 5pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 2021

Show | 9am to 4pm
Salesroom | 9am to 3pm

Hosted by: The African Violet Club of Greater Atlanta



Visit avsa.org
for more info.

AVSA 75th Anniversary: Applause to Our Valued Commercial Legends

By Carolee Carter, Chair, AVSA Publications Committee

One of the things we most missed from not having a convention this year is that mad dash into the sales room to buy plants! Our commercial vendors work very hard all year to not only produce new hybridized varieties, but also to travel many miles to each convention site with loaded vans so that we can spend lots of money increasing our collections — only, of course, when we get home saying, “I have too many plants!” But, we love every one of them, don’t we?

I am writing this in late summer during our COVID-19 pandemic, and as I was reading my newspaper recently, I was struck by a column that should be a boost to all African violet and other gesneriad growers. It said “It wasn’t just toilet paper that people stocked up on during the pandemic. There was a run on houseplants too!”

Really? Yes, apparently the demand for greenery was so high at one online plant store that some varieties were consistently sold out. The customers wanted plants that they could grow in their houses or apartments, and then they wanted to learn how to grow them. African violets were high on the demand list.

That demand likely was filled by some of our long-time Commercial Members, many of whom are legendary. So, what constitutes a legendary figure anyway? Webster’s dictionary defines it as “extremely well-known; famous or renowned.” I contacted several commercial vendors who were in business in 1996 to ask what changes they have witnessed during the past 25 years.

Our legendary Commercial Members have some great insights and stories. Here is what they revealed.

“I will continue to supply good quality plants for a reasonable price.”



**Pat Hancock,
Buckeye Violets**

Despite the fact that Pat Hancock, the famous hybridizer of the Buckeye series of African violets, has sold her online commercial business (to Violet Peddlers Plus) and has retired, her reflections on her commercial life are fascinating. Pat won the AVSA Hudson Award in 2015. Here are some thoughts that she shared:

“My life has been richly blessed by my hybridizing and by being an AVSA commercial for the past 25 years or more. Meeting and knowing so many great people would never have happened to me had it not been for my selling at AVSA convention shows.

“I began hybridizing Buckeye violets in 1992, and for some time I was the only person growing and showing them. It was my plan that they would have fewer, larger leaves that would fall like shingles on a roof and appear more symmetrical. I received many red ribbons from judges with comments that the “leaves were too large.” My plants did not look like the plants with more, smaller leaves that they were accustomed to judging.

"In 2005, at the convention in Cincinnati, things began to change. My friend, Ann Thomas, won the best standard AVSA collection with three Buckeyes, and judges made very nice comments to her and to me. It was also at this show that I was awarded the Bronze Medal Award for my hybridizing efforts. I had not signed up for the banquet on that Saturday night since it was my daughter's birthday. Joyce Stork kept telling me she had an extra ticket and tried to get Ann and me to stay. I finally agreed and was completely surprised by the award. I couldn't stop crying, and I'm sure the pictures of that night were pretty bad! I had only my working clothes on, and I just couldn't stop crying!

"When I first became a commercial, I would usually have one person helping me. When the doors would open to the sales room at the convention, everyone would run to Rob's or Paul's sales tables. After a while, they would gradually trickle over to my table and buy a few Buckeyes.

"At Cherry Hill in 2011, Lynn Lombard came into the sales room and announced "get ready, we are going to open the doors!" I said to my helper 'we've got time — they won't be here for a while.' Much to my surprise, the doors opened, and we were bombarded! We couldn't handle the rush. Thelma Miller saw the look on my face and said 'you need help?' I nodded, and she came behind and helped me sell.

"After that, sales increased every year as my plants became more and more popular. I am so grateful to all the great growers who grew and showed my plants, especially those who shoved 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler' to the top of the list.

"In 2019 in Houston, I had four helpers. We had a very hard time handling the opening crowd. People were taking two baskets and filling them to the brim!

"I hope growers will continue to grow and show Buckeyes until something newer and better comes along. I am flattered to know that many new hybridizers are using Buckeyes in their programs. Houston was my last show as a commercial. My age and the coronavirus have made me stop. I wish you all 'Great Growing.'"

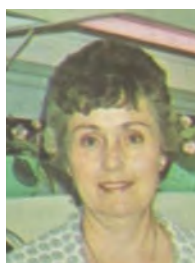


Jo Schrimsher, JoS Violets

Jo Schrimsher wrote, "When I started JoS Violets in the early 1980s, I had a computer and a dot matrix printer. I advertised in the *AVM*, *Dixie (DAVS)* and *Lone Star (LSAVC)* newsletters. I mailed out my lists and took orders by mail and phone. In the 1990s, my daughter-in-law set up my website. Mail-order business has continued to grow since then.

"I have so enjoyed attending and learning so much at the annual shows for AVSA, Dixie and the Lone Star AVC. I have made so many friends from all over the United States and some other countries. Customers seem to be most interested in many of the vintage varieties and the newest varieties. Sometimes, after a picture of a variety appears in the *AVM*, I cannot keep up with the demand.

"I will continue to supply good quality plants for a reasonable price. African violet growers are the best friends and customers!"



Connie Swift Cornell, Swift Moist-Rite Planters

Connie Swift Cornell wrote, "Our company, Swift Moist-Rite Planters, was started by my parents [Jack and June Swift; June is pictured here] in the mid-1970s. My dad invented the planter's design, and he and my mom promoted them for several decades until my dad's health declined due to multiple strokes. My mom continued to fill orders for the planters after he passed away, but she didn't go to national conventions. She was pretty active into her nineties, but she passed away from cancer in 2018.

"I am their only child and inherited their Trust, including becoming the owner of the Swift Moist-Rite company. After retiring from my nursing career at the end of 2019, my husband, David Cornell, and I decided to start making Swift Moist-Rite planters again. We attended our Tulsa African Violet Club's sale in February and sold many planters (1 to 2 at a time), mostly to people who had never heard of them.

"We had planned to sell at the convention in Little Rock last May, but as we all know, it was cancelled due to COVID-19. We are advertising our planters in the *AVM*, on Facebook and through our website: www.swiftmoistriteplanters.com. We have enjoyed all the African violet people we have been able to meet through emails, etc. We have begun growing violets and have acquired some of my mom's many hybrids."



**Paul Sorano,
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses**

Paul was unable to participate because of a heavy workload, but I encourage everyone to revisit the article that Richard Craft wrote about Paul and Lyndon Lyon in the September/October 2019 issue of *AVM*. It's a wonderful visit

into Paul's world of hybridizing and growing. And . . . Lyndon Lyon's son, Robert, wrote a wonderful remembrance of Lyndon Lyon after his passing in the July-August 1999 *AVM* (page 47).



**Ronn Nadeau,
Nadeau African Violet Seeds**

Ronn Nadeau has been supplying us with African violet seeds for a long time, and I was happy to hear from him about his hybridizing and seed production journey. Here's what he had to say:

"In 1974, soon after starting my career in organic chemistry at Monsanto Co., I revived a hobby I had enjoyed as a preteen, finding nice African violets and propagating them from leaf cuttings. This time around, I got into hybridizing and soon had more seeds than I could use. So, I put them up for sale with ads in the *AVM* and found buyers at a slow but steady pace.

"In 1980, I married Katsuko Shimizu of Tokyo, Japan, and she enthusiastically took on some of the seed production work. I bought ads in several magazines and the seeds sold well. We hired two part-time people to increase production, which by that time included selling gram quantities to seed companies. One gram of African violet seeds is approximately 100,000 seeds.

"Leaping ahead to 1998, I retired from Monsanto. Before then, retail seed sales were conducted via an 800 number. One year later, I created a website (NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com) and started receiving orders from around the globe. In every order I asked customers how they heard of my seeds. Of those who replied, around 80 percent said 'Googled African violet seeds' or similar. Also, there are several social media groups specializing in African violets, and my seeds are often discussed there. I never could have guessed that so many people in the world are curious about African violet seeds! But there are a lot of people on this planet, and even if only a tiny, tiny percent of them occasionally think about African violet seeds, it adds up to a viable number for business. Many overseas customers have expressed joy upon learning about my African violet seeds because import restrictions severely limit leaves and plants from entering their countries.

"Recently I added an exciting new feature to my seed offerings. Whereas in the past I sold seeds only as mixtures of many crosses, I now sell some that come from specific crosses. On my website, for each specific cross, there are photos of the pod and pollen parents and of their fully developed blooming babies.

"What is the future of African violet seed production? Mine is the only company that produces African violet seeds in large quantities for sales to individuals and large seed companies.

"Pollination of African violet flowers is not easy because their pollen is enclosed within small yellow pollen sacs. Traditional pollination methods are good for making hundreds of seeds while hybridizing but are useless for making millions of seeds for selling. Also, it is necessary to have male/female pollination couples that make a lot of seeds per pollination — 500 to 1000, instead of the more normal number of 0 to 200. Finally, it is necessary that our seeds produce attractive babies.

"I continually search for more parent couples that make a lot of seeds that produce attractive new plants. In this *AVM* issue, page 18, I tell the seeds-to-blooms story of specific cross seeds from parents 'WIN x SKI.'"



**Ralph Robinson,
The Violet Barn**

Ralph Robinson has been growing and exhibiting since 1975 and has been shipping to customers worldwide since 1985. He and Olive Ma Robinson are the hybridizers of the Rob's and

Ma's variety series that we all love.

I talked with Ralph (Rob) to ask him about how his business has evolved. He began by saying that "it's not a business where little ladies send checks in the mail for the plants they want like they did back then. There was no Internet, and they saw violets they wanted to buy at their local shows. Most of our customers were AVSA members and members of their local societies.

"In the beginning, The Violet Barn just offered different varieties of African violets, and then in the 90s, we began selling *Streptocarpus*, and we were the only ones selling them. Today, even if we sold nothing else and just sold streps, we could survive. It's the bread and butter for us. Then, *kohlerias* began to become popular, and when we had them in stock, they were gone in a matter of days.

"This year, because of COVID-19 with people being stuck in their homes, what we've sold through August is what we normally sell through the end of the year. It's been a really hard year to keep up with certain varieties, and we find ourselves apologizing to people that we don't have what they want. We only list on the website what we have. If you see it, we have it. If you order it, we ship it and we do not send substitutes."

I asked if he and Olive were still hybridizing, and he said "there's simply no time for it. We are keeping up with so many orders from people who want what we list that the time and effort it takes to hybridize new varieties just doesn't exist.

"In the 70s there were a number of businesses that made their living selling African violets as opposed to how it has become a second income. We hoped there would be a younger person who would like to make a career out of this, but that's not likely."

I asked whether eBay sales have hurt, and he said it's a good thing that those who originally buy on eBay get introduced to the hobby that way. "The downside is that they are only looking at what that grower is offering. But, when you go on The Violet Barn website, it's like you become an impulsive shopper in a mall. You see what you were originally looking for, and then you spot a species, or a *streptocarpus* or a *kohleria*, and become hooked with other things that you were unaware of before, and the possibilities are more conducive to widening your collections to plants you would never have considered before."



**David Harris,
Dave's Violets**

David Harris has been busy in the African violet world for a long time, and his view of what has changed is interesting.

"I have seen much change in my nearly 30 years of growing plants. One example that readily comes to mind is that plastic pot companies are being bought out by their competition. The price of plastic has escalated by as much as six to seven times over cost.

"Another change is the decline in show attendance. I joined AVSA in 1992 and attended several local club shows, where, of course, I purchased African violets. When I attended my first AVSA convention in 1995, back in those days we had over 650 attendees. Today, 300-plus people are considered normal. In the 1998 AVSA convention in Sacramento, California, I saw more families attending, and there were rides! During those years some conventions were held in April instead of May, and I never could figure out why.

"In 1994, I attended a show on the outskirts of Kansas City. While looking at plants to buy, a small plant called a "sinningia" caught my eye. I waited for several hours to see the lady who grew it so she could tell me everything she knew about how to grow them. Six months later I had a small collection of sinningias!

"Here is where the past and future meet. Sinningias are my specialty. Back in the early days you saw very

few of them in shows. I started to grow a lot of them to make them more available to buy, and by doing this you began to see more sinningias in shows. Then, I started to cross the sinningias, calling my hybrids the Ozark's series. What has made me proud is that I have seen the Ozark's series being used in other sinningia crosses.

"During my early show days, I saw about 90 percent African violets and 10 percent Other Gesneriads entered into the show. Today, the show runs about 60 percent African violets and around 35 percent Other Gesneriads. And, back in those early days, the AVSA Commercial Members mailed catalogs to hobbyists to encourage orders. Now, the Internet is how most people order and "daydream" about buying new and older plants. I still receive and fulfill requests for a mailed price list to whoever asks.

"My memory of arriving at AVSA conventions in those early days is seeing so many friends and the commercial members such as the Pittmans (Hortense with all her beautiful mini-violets), Sandy and Shirley Sanders (I miss them), Joyce and Kent Stork, Paul Sorano, the Ness's and many more. I can't forget my good friends and buddies John and Doris Brownlie either — seeing them in the sales room with well over 1,000 African violet leaves cut and perfectly wrapped. Just amazing!

"If you want to see AVSA grow, and if you like *African Violet Magazine*, keep renewing your membership

... in the 90s, we began selling *Streptocarpus*, and we were the only ones selling them.

and encourage new people to join. Join your local club and work to support that club!

"In closing, please support our commercial members. We are losing so many from days gone by; there are only two left who have been in the sales room longer than I have."

Conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed reading about these commercial legends who have been in business for more than 25 years. They have made our hobby so much more enjoyable because of the ease to add "must-have" varieties to our collections.

Keep in mind that those featured in this article are not the only AVSA Commercial Members. There are many more, so check out their ads at the back of our magazine and go shopping!

BLOOMLALA
Adorn Yourself in Violets
Beautiful clothing items featuring African violets from Bloomlala!

Use code **JOY** when you order online and AVSA receives a portion of the proceeds.

bloomlala.com/collections/violet



75th Anniversary: AVSA Commercial Members, 1980s

Photos by Lynn Lombard



L to R: Barbara Elkin of Auburn, California; Barbara and John Cook, Cape Cod Violetry, Falmouth, Massachusetts; Dottie Wilson, Wilson's Violet Haven, Bryan, Texas.



L to R: Joyce and Kent Stork, Kent's Flowers, Fremont, Nebraska; June and Jack Swift, Swift Moist Rite Planters, Dallas, Texas; Gene and Joanne Lloyd, Lloyd's African Violets, Cato, New York.



L to R: Leila Engenites, Annalee Violetry, Bayside, New York; Linda Ray, Ray's Violets, College Station, Texas; Anne Tinari (left) of Tinari Greenhouses, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, and Melvin Robey, author of "African Violets, Queens of the Indoor Gardening Kingdom," Palm Springs, California.

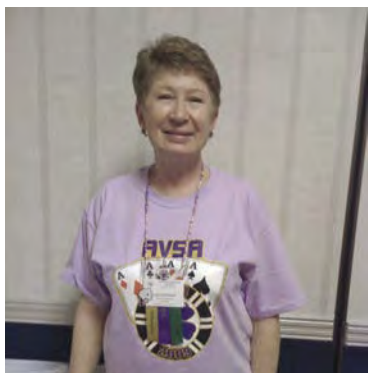
AVSA 75th Anniversary: 2005 to 2010



L to R: Right side of Court of Honor, Cincinnati, 2005; 60th Anniversary Tea with Bev Promersberger (l) and Marge Savage; Minneapolis, 2006; Court of Honor, 2007, Denver. Photos by Janet Riemer.



L to R: Olive Ma Robinson design demonstration, Denver, 2007; Show winners, Tulsa, 2008; Pat Hancock and Lori Hilfer pausing with Mel Grice on drive to Reno, 2009. Photos by Mel Grice.



L to R: Partial Court of Honor, Reno, 2009, photo by Janet Riemer; Lynn Lombard, Reno, 2009; Showroom in Raleigh, NC, 2010. Photos by Mel Grice.



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Blue Dragon

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by: L. Lyon/P. Sorano
Hybridized in 2005,
Honor Roll in 2008, Best
Varieties list in 2019 and 2020



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Harbor Blue

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Exhibited by: Rodney Barnett
Hybridized by: T. Weber
From Best AVSA Collection/
Standards, 2010
Large

Contest Entry —

My Adventure with “White Queens”

By Frank Tropea Somerville, Massachusetts

I first started growing African violets many years ago. I bought a white-flowered one and a blue-flowered one from Market Basket. I thought both looked pretty and I tried to take good care of them. The white one I found to be really pretty. Both violets even bloomed in the winter, which cheered me up in the cold, bleak New England winter. I then read of people who bred or — more properly, cloned — baby violets from leaves.

I had some extra pots and planting soil and I cut off some leaves from the white one with short stems attached to the leaves. As instructed, I put the short stems and the leaves into the fresh soil and I watered the pot with a little fertilizer and warm water. Then I placed a banana clear plastic bag over the pot with a rubber band. Then I waited. And I am very glad I waited. Maybe I overwatered the white-flowered plant too much because it died on me. But after waiting three months, I had its baby plants. When they were big enough, I transplanted them together into a separate, larger pot. They bloomed about nine months later and really reminded me of the mother plant. They are nothing fancy, but I have sentiment attached to those plain but pretty white ones.

Meeting White Queen

Then I joined the AVSA and the Boston club. A dear friend of mine, Chris Mason, told me about the violets from a famous greenhouse in New York State named Lyndon Lyons. On my computer screen I found the photos of their fancy violets totally exquisite and beautiful. But Chris told me of a special white violet he had once raised called EK-Belaia Koroleva. It's a Russian variety from E. Korshunova (and called “White Queen” by some sellers and growers here in the states) that is rather rare in this state. I got my first two from a breeder named Joann in Texas.

But after waiting three months, I had its baby plants.

Unfortunately, I lost one but the other one grew big and gave me the most ornate and beautiful white blossoms I ever beheld. Later, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses began selling some and I got three more from them. I decided to take some leaves several months ago from my biggest (Joann's) White Queen and breed them. I did the usual soil routine and nearly 2 1/2 months later, they began sprouting babies.

I put both leaves that have sprouted babies in separate little pots with good soil and a little fertilizer and watered them well. I placed them where they get enough light but are in indirect sunlight. I've also become great friends with Peggy Crawford and she generously gave me some plant lights to use.

I've promised Peggy and Chris each an EK-Belaia Koroleva mother leaf and some babies so they can raise a few for themselves.

What I am going to do with all the babies when every leaf I have in the breeding bowl has her plantlets, I do not know. But these plants are so enchantingly beautiful I will undoubtedly keep some and give the rest to hobbyists who can really appreciate them and nurture them. Happy growing.



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

***S. tongwensis* 3397 Uppsala Clone**

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Best in Show for Dr. Bill Price, 2008 National Show
Species

Contest Entry —

Alexei Kuznetsov Remembered

By Rich Follett Strasburg, Virginia

My first SK- African violet — СК-Первая Любовь (SK-First Love) — arrived in the mail on a rainy Wednesday afternoon in April. At that time, I knew nothing about Alexei Kuznetsov and his hybridizing work; I just wanted a few interesting and different new African violet plants to grow and СК-Первая Любовь was reasonably priced on eBay. I opened the box, took out the carefully packaged blooming plant inside, and was astonished by the size and number of blossoms on such a tiny plant.



SK-First Love. Photo courtesy of Ekaterina Zybinova.

Learning About Alexei

Of course, I wanted to know more about SK- hybrids, so I went online and did some research. I learned that the hybridizer of my СК-Первая Любовь was a young man named Alexei Kuznetsov and that he created many wonderful varieties — mostly miniatures and semi-miniatures, which are my favorites. I have since added several to my collection and they have quickly become like little friends, always on hand to brighten my day. During my research, I also learned — with great sadness — that Alexei died tragically in 2017 at only 32 years old.

The more I researched,
the more I understood
that Alexei was a rare
and special human
being.

Since I would never have the opportunity to meet or communicate with Alexei, I decided to do the next best thing: I set out to try to get a sense of the man he was. With the help of Google and some Russian-speaking African violet friends, I was able to translate some Russian articles and read the posts and comments on some Russian-language blogs. Without exception, Alexei was praised as a quiet, generous, and kind man with a strong perfectionist streak and a great passion for his African violet hybrids and those who grow them.



Alexei with some of his hybrids in Dom Fialki. Photo by Ekaterina Zybinova.

The more I researched, the more I understood that Alexei was a rare and special human being. With no formal background in genetics, engineering, or any subject related to African violet hybridization, he managed to make unique and lasting contributions to the world of African violets. An SK- African violet generally is characterized by small size, a perfect and naturally occurring rosette form, and a tremendous bloom count. At a time when his fellow growers were keenly interested in large blooms and even larger plants, Alexei dared to be original and strive for perfect specimens that display in miniature all of the best traits of Russian and Ukrainian hybrids. In his short life, Alexei expanded the boundaries of African violet genetics. The appeal of Alexei's exquisite hybrids crosses international boundaries, too. Growers in the United States adore them.

American Love of SK- Violets

American African violet growers' love for his hybrids would no doubt have pleased Alexei greatly. Although he abhorred being in the spotlight and shied away from the admiration he received in the online African violet forums and blogs, where he was praised so often for his accomplishments and generosity, he loved to see his hybrids appreciated. He also would share them generously, usually at no cost, with anyone who expressed an interest. Alexei spent a great deal of time and energy teaching fellow African violet enthusiasts about the benefits of wick watering and the process of hybridization; in short, he was respected, admired, and even loved by anyone who had the chance to get to know him.

Although Alexei passed away before most American growers had a chance to meet or speak with him, it is safe to say that they would surely have felt the same way his compatriots did. As part of my research, I asked American African violet growers to share their feelings about Alexei's hybrids. Through this approach, I located one American African violet enthusiast who had a chance to travel to Russia and see the place where Alexei's amazing hybrids first were displayed. Marie Glass of Black Oak Violets writes:

"I really do not think that there is another flower in this world with as much power to spread happiness and love as the African violet. Struck by their beauty

in the early 1970s, I became a first-generation violet grower in my family. It was not until 2013, however, that I became fully aware of that power as I saw it demonstrated at Dom Fialki, the "House of Violets" in Moscow. Entranced by the Russian hybrids that filled the shelves of this little shop, I listened intently as Vladimir Kalgin told me that their breathtakingly big blooms provided beauty for the people struggling to establish a new way of life. 'They don't grow potatoes,' he said, 'they are a bit of luxury that can be had.'

"I searched his shelves for the presence of miniature varieties, which were mainly what I grew at that time. He patiently explained to me that most purchasers were looking for BIG, and he shaped that in the air with his hands. I came home from Russia with many beautiful memories and three violet leaves that were to change my life.

"Russian hybrids were just beginning to become readily available in the United States. I would spend many hours searching for Russian hybrids on the internet. As I took my plants to market, people were drawn to the large blooms. I, however, was still looking for the same beauty on a smaller scale.

"As time went on, I found some. They were little bits of perfection: rosettes of well-behaved leaves and blooms that were very true to their names. 'Apple Orchard' took me back to the delicate blossoms found on my grandmother's trees. 'Landscape in the Mist' has a mysterious air about it, and then there is 'First Love.' How one cannot want to cup that in their hand and take it home is beyond me!

"So it was with great sadness that I heard the whispers of Alexei's passing at the Buffalo AVSA Convention in 2018. So young: the death of a promise, an ending nearly before a true beginning, I have made it my goal as a grower to make sure that Alexei's beautiful creations continue to live. I am collecting as many of his hybrids as I am able to locate and then sharing starts with fellow growers with the only stipulation being that they grow these varieties and share them so that his talent as a hybridizer lives far into the future. I believe that this tribute of beauty is the most fitting one we can bestow."

Even enthusiasts new to the African violet world are enchanted by Alexei's hybrids. Theresa Green Davis, a recent arrival on the African violet scene, responded to my call for testimonials with words that I believe exemplify most Americans' first impression of Alexei's work: *"Currently I have two of Alexei's beautiful violets — SK-Apple Orchard and SK-Phoenix. I love them both and they grow and bloom very well for me. I plan to add more of his violets to my collection. Wish me luck on finding them all!"*

Although it has been more than three years since Alexei left us to wonder what he might have accomplished had his time on Earth been longer, his marvelous African violet hybrids ensure that he will always be remembered. Alexei's career may have been brief, but his legacy will endure as long as people enjoy growing and sharing

African violets. Even though I never had a chance to know Alexei, I feel his spirit every time I see or care for one of his African violet jewels and I know many others feel the same way. Thank you, Alexei Kuznetsov, for leaving behind such beautiful reflections of the kind and generous man you were. From all of us here in the United States: Спасибо, мой друг [Thank you, my friend!].



Sk-Foggy Landscape (left) and SK-Voljyshka (right). Photos by Ekaterina Zybinova.

Barbara Burde Endowment Fund

By Randy G. Deutsch Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Donations received from June 1, 2020, through August 31, 2020 Total: \$95

■ **Two-tone — \$25-\$49**

Burbank AVS, Burbank, CA
Caroline Storey, San Marcos, TX

■ **Thumbprint — Under \$25**

Karen Boswell, Port Hueneme, CA
Angelina Grundhof, Gulfport, FL

Thumbprint (Continued)

Carol Hixenbaugh, Green Cove Springs, FL
Debbie McInnis, Floyds Knob, IN



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Aca's Red Ember

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Hybridized by: J. Brownlie
Honor Roll, 2007
Standard



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Broadway Star Trail

AVSA 75th Anniversary

Won Best in Show for
Dr. Bill Price,
2009 National Show
Semimini Trailer

In Memory

Hortense Pittman

Hortense Pittman, age 94, of Celina, Texas, passed away August 26, 2020. She was born February 12, 1926, in Pilot Point, Texas, to Roy Jackson and Thelma (Bradford) Ellison. She married William Fredrick Pope on September 30, 1942, who preceded her in death in 1965. She married Jessie Ray Pittman on December 3, 1966, in San Antonio, Texas.

Hortense was an exceptional woman who lived a remarkable life. As a young woman, she baked cakes and pies for the family store in Celina while honing her skills as a seamstress. She eventually sewed costumes for the Dallas Ballet and dresses for prominent women in Dallas. Many years later, Ray gave her an African violet as a birthday present.

The African violet world was blessed that day by Ray Pittman giving his lovely wife a beautiful African violet. That African violet started her career in violet hybridizing and she joined the Alamo African Violet Society of San Antonio, Texas, in the late 1960s. She also joined AVSA. While president of the local society, her club had its first AVSA judged show.

In 1975, Hortense assisted with the organization of Lone Star African Violet Council to support the AVSA National Convention in Austin, Texas, in 1978. Hortense attended her first national convention in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1977. She attended all AVSA National Conventions and Lone Star Conventions until late in her life.

Hortense became a Commercial Member of AVSA in 1978. She had her first display table at the Austin convention that year. She had quite a few display tables at conventions and won numerous awards, including Best New Cultivar, over the years. She started hybridizing African violets in the early 1970s. Her first series was the standards in the “Alamo

Series,” and her last series was the miniatures and semiminimis of the “Jolly Series.” She has more than 800 varieties listed in AVSA First Class, and of these, more than 450 are registered African violets. Hortense hybridized standards, miniatures, semi-miniatures and trailers over the years.

Hortense served AVSA for more than 50 years as a Member, Commercial Member, Master Judge, Hybridizer, Director, 3rd Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and President. She was the 27th President of AVSA, serving in that role from 1993 to 1995.

Hortense has received the following AVSA Awards: Bronze Medal for Horticultural Achievement in 1986, Honorary Life Membership in 1995, and Hall of Fame in 2008.

Her African violet family will remember Hortense as the face of African violets for more than 50 years. She was the model for profound love of African violets and commitment to AVSA and the African violet family. She had an unparalleled work ethic and drive and she spoke encouragement and life to everyone she met. We will miss her and rejoice that she had hybridized so many lovely African violets that will give her violet family the pleasure of growing and showing for many years. Hortense was preceded in death by her husband, Jesse Ray Pittman, and a daughter and stepson. She is survived by her stepdaughter, six grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and numerous other family members.

Barbara Elkin

Northern California's African Violet Societies and AVSA lost one of our foundation pillars this summer when Ms. Barbara Elkin passed away in her sleep at the young age of 89 years. Barbara was a life member of AVSA, a Master Judge, teacher of judges,

a hybridizer, and the past Vintage Violets columnist for the *African Violet Magazine*. She held multiple officer positions for AVSA and in Northern California clubs. Barbara also was an important member of the Gesneriad Society as one of their judges and a teacher of judges. Barbara is greatly missed.

With her big heart and caring nature, Barbara encouraged several Northern California African Violet Society members to become full members of AVSA and judges. She taught judging schools year after year, instilling in her students the need to be honest and kind in their judging endeavors. Besides teaching judging schools, her classes encouraged learning, and were always supported with a wonderful home-cooked meal. Barbara taught Society members how to create designs whenever a local show was being staged. She also encouraged all participants to share supplies and ideas as they set up their entries for the show. This created a supportive and wonderful learning environment for putting on shows, and her students spread her mantra to other shows at the state and national levels.

Barbara served as the president, vice president and secretary of Capitol City African Violet Society in Sacramento. She also held offices in the Delta Gesneriad and African Violet Society in Sacramento; the African Violet Society of South Bay, San Francisco; and Nite Bloomers African Violet Society. She has held the positions of president, vice president, treasurer and recording secretary for the Northern California Council of African Violet Societies. She was president and treasurer of the African Violet Society Judges Council of Northern California. For many

years, Barbara chaired the Vintage Violet Committee for AVSA. She also served on the Awards Committee, Building and Maintenance Committee, Convention Committee, and as chair of the Library Committee for AVSA. Barbara was an AVSA Director and chaired two National Conventions, in 1998 and 2009. She won the Hudson Affiliate Leadership Award. For decades, until her health declined, she never missed a national convention.

Barbara could grow anything well, and her lovely home with its built-in greenhouse was full of beautiful and unique gesneriads. Barbara was well known for her baking, cooking, canning and making of preserves. She always brought home top awards for her efforts from local competitions. Barbara was married to her husband, Jack, for more than 60 years, until he passed; they had three children, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was one of a kind and cannot be replaced.

Ann Shirley

The Memphis African Violet Society has lost a treasured member, Ann Shirley. She passed away July 20. Ann came into the club in the 1960s and served as its president, vice-president and treasurer over the years. Through hard work and dedication, Ann became an AVSA Master Judge.

Ann was a serious grower, an expert, actually. She showed beautiful mini and semimini African violets and episcias. She shared her vast knowledge with every member of our club and encouraged us to grow. A better friend and mentor cannot be found. She touched all our lives and we will truly miss Ann.

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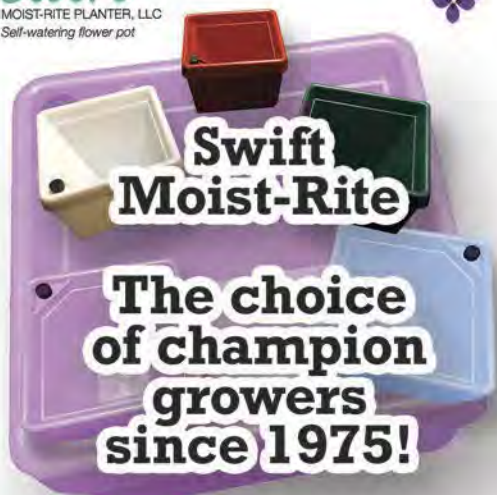


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